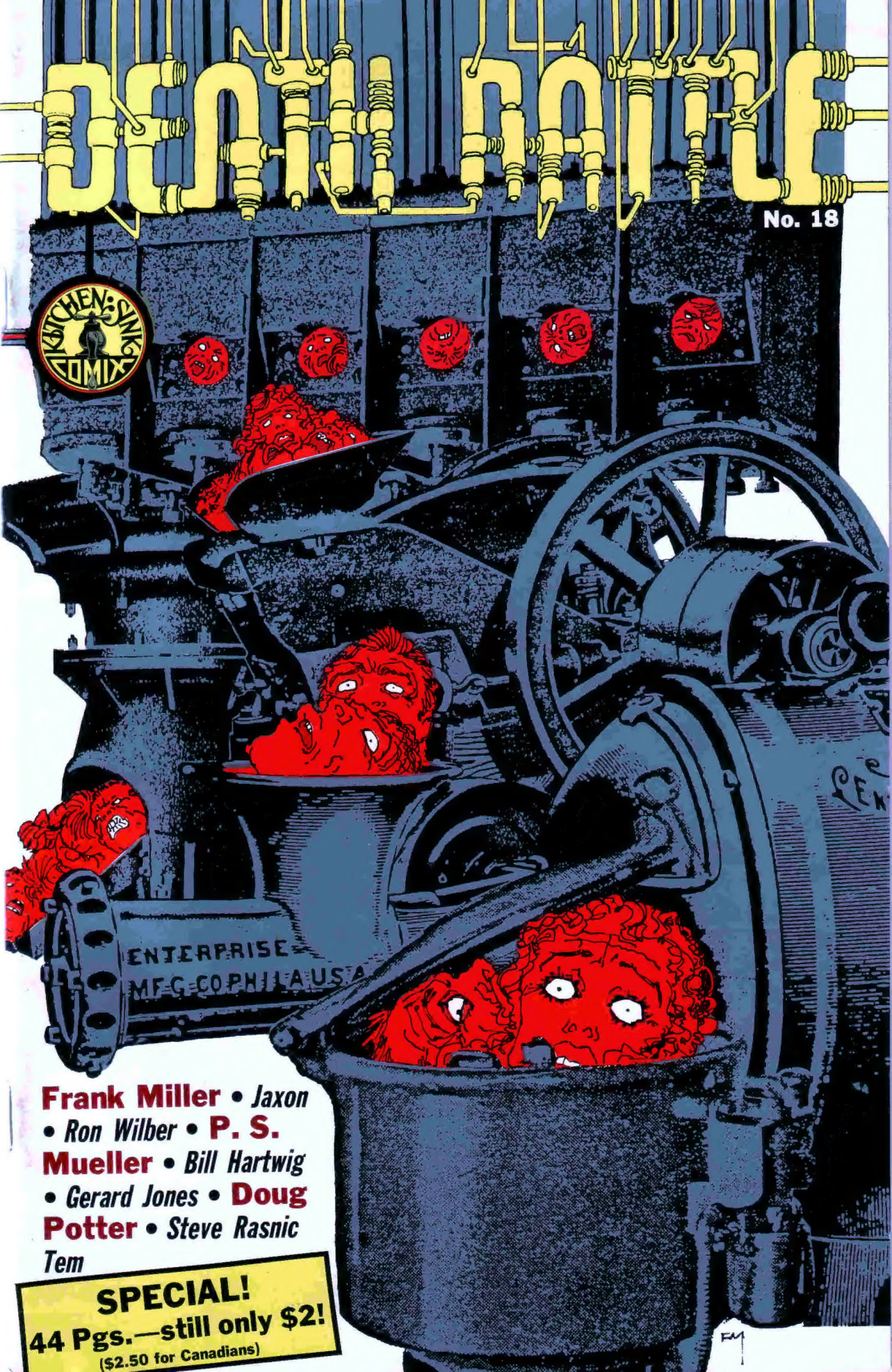
DEATH RAY
No. 18
KITCHEN SINK COMIX
ENTERPRISE
MFG CO PHILA U.S.A.
Frank Miller • Jaxon • Ron Wilber • P. S. Mueller • Bill Hartwig • Gerard Jones • Doug Potter • Steve Rasnic Tem
SPECIAL!
44 Pgs.—still only $2!
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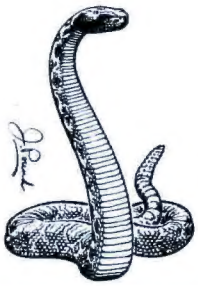

RATTLER

MILLER • JAXON • MUELLER • HARTWIG
JONES • POTTER • RASNIC TEM • WILBER

Well, folks, this is it. No kidding around this time. With this issue, #18, ***Death Rattle*** will be going out of business. The various gluts in the comic book market and perhaps the title's sometimes eccentric (but ***great***) content worked against it. We're not bitter about it, you understand; that's life in the comics biz, ha ha. Yes, let's be lighthearted about this thing. Let's rejoice and be merry that we lasted this long—against tall odds and short circulation. Let's ring the carillons and light the firecrackers because many fine artists and writers appeared here: **Rand Holmes, Mike Baron, Al Williamson, Basil Wolverton, Frank Frazetta, Mark Schultz, Bob Ingersoll, Will Eisner, John Wooley, Don Simpson** and a veritable crush of others.

Let's, by gum, go out with a fat, lush and provocative 40-page monstrous issue almost utterly crammed with goodies! Yeah, that's it! We'll lose our shirts, but ***so what?*** Our shirts are rags anyway! And you know what? ***We don't care!*** Yes, that's us—we'll do ***anything*** to give you enjoyment and advance the cause of horrible art! Umm..did that come out right?

It matters little. Words mean nothing here. You know why? 'Cause we've got **Frank Miller**, that's why! Yes the ***Dark Knight*** man literally ***begged*** us, on his ***knees***, to do our final cover! So after we released his drawing hand from the ever-tightening vise, he turned in the gruesome piece that greeted you at your favorite li'l comics shop. We affectionately call it "Hamburger Heads." It's colored by **Jan Manweiler**, who's a vegetarian herself.

Our first story is the exciting conclusion to **Jaxon's** "Bulto" saga. Off and on through the entire run of ***Death Rattle***, this Texas artist has contributed top quality stories to us, from "God's Bosom" in issue two to the end of his serial in issue 18. Along with **Rand Holmes**, he's appeared the most times in these pages. Our sincere thanks to both of them. They are two strong reasons ***Death Rattle*** remained a quality book from start to finish.

Then there's **Steve Rasnic Tem's** and **Ron Wilber's** "Small Acts of Revenge." This story is both an EC homage and a gentle warning that one, perhaps, should not get too wrapped up in comics. Dr. Wertham would be proud of us for this one. Tem is a newcomer to ***Death Rattle***, although he's been published by a raft of magazines and has authored a couple of books. Wilber was last seen in issue 16's "Annie," written by **John Holland**. He and Holland are frequent contributors to ***Critters***.

Gerard Jones and **Doug Potter** are two more newcomers to the honor roll with their "When I Grow Up," a disturbing tale of wish fulfillment gone awry. Jones is an ex-critic who is now best known for his work on ***The Trouble With Girls***, and he also has a lot of other irons in the fire. Potter recently did a one-shot book for us called ***Chips & Vanilla***, and is gearing up for his new series, ***Denizens of Deep City***. Watch for it in December!

Finally, there's those two old Wisconsin curmudgeons, **P.S. Mueller** and **Bill Hartwig**, appearing once more for auld lang syne. Their latest opus is, "The Old Wisconsin That I Knew." Pete and Bill said they wanted to commemorate ***Death Rattle's*** departure with a really gross and nasty story. Their anatomically correct view of viscera and organs certainly fills their self-imposed requirements. Thanks, guys, only you should have made the raccoon a badger. But, hey, we love it.

As for you readers, you loyal and small crew, thanks for buying and reading ***Death Rattle***, and for writing when the spirit moved you. Now go out there and have a Happy Halloween!

Next issue: There is no next issue.

STAFF

Editor/Publisher . . . . . **Denis Kitchen**
Story Editor . . . . . **Dave Schreiner**
Cover color & production . . **Jan Manweiler**
Circulation . . . . . **Paula Sohn**

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BULTO

THE COW CAMP

THIRTY YEARS LATER...

YES, THE SILVER'S STILL THERE, BOYS. DON'T LET ANYONE TELL YOU DIFFERENT! THOSE BARS ARE CACHED UP IN COMANCHERÍA, MARKED BY THINGS LIKE COPPER PLATES, MULADAS PAINTED ON ROCKS, AND BROKEN METATES THAT SAY EXCAVAD!!

IGNACIO GUERRA GRINNED; HE KNEW HIS FRIEND WAS LYING.

LISTEN AT THAT! OUR AMIGO COULD BE LIVING HIGH ON THE HOG IN MEXICO CITY, BUT HERE HE SITS, FREEZING HIS BUTT OFF WITH THE REST OF US! HA!

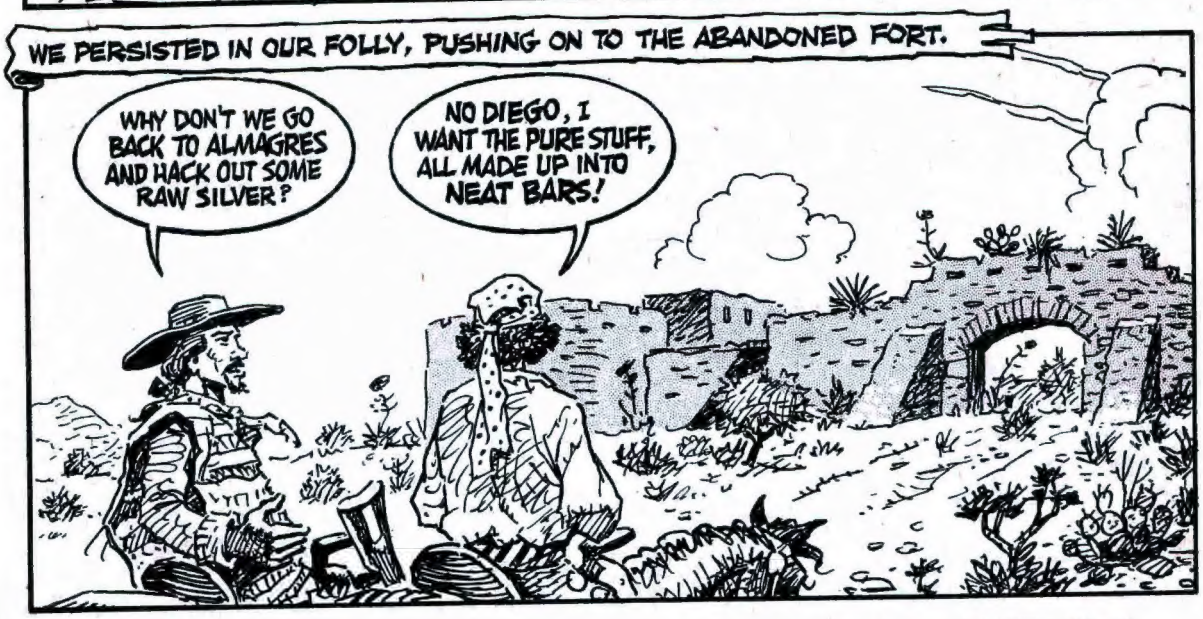
THE VAQUEROS HUNKERED AND SMILED ACROSS THE FIRE, WAITING FOR GORTARI TO SPEAK..

WE TOOK 2 BIG MULES SO WE COULD CARRY OUT ENOUGH SILVER TO MAKE LIFE EASY FOR AWHILE.

THE COUNTRY WAS MENACING, THE BULTOS NOT APPEASED BY FELIPE'S DEATH. THEY WERE STILL WATCHING THE SILVER, ANGRY AT OUR INTRUSION.

BAD THINGS STARTED TO HAPPEN.. ONE OF THE MULES DRANK SOME BAD WATER, SWELLED UP AND DIED.

THE COMANCHES WERE EVERYWHERE, THICK AS FLEAS ON JOSEFA'S DOG.


WE PERSISTED IN OUR FOLLY, PUSHING ON TO THE ABANDONED FORT.
WHY DON'T WE GO BACK TO ALMAGRES AND HACK OUT SOME RAW SILVER?
NO DIEGO, I WANT THE PURE STUFF, ALL MADE UP INTO NEAT BARS!

SO ME AND ROQUE WENT INTO ARMADILLO GULLY, A PLACE I'D SEEN FELIPE TAKE HIS PACKTRAINS.

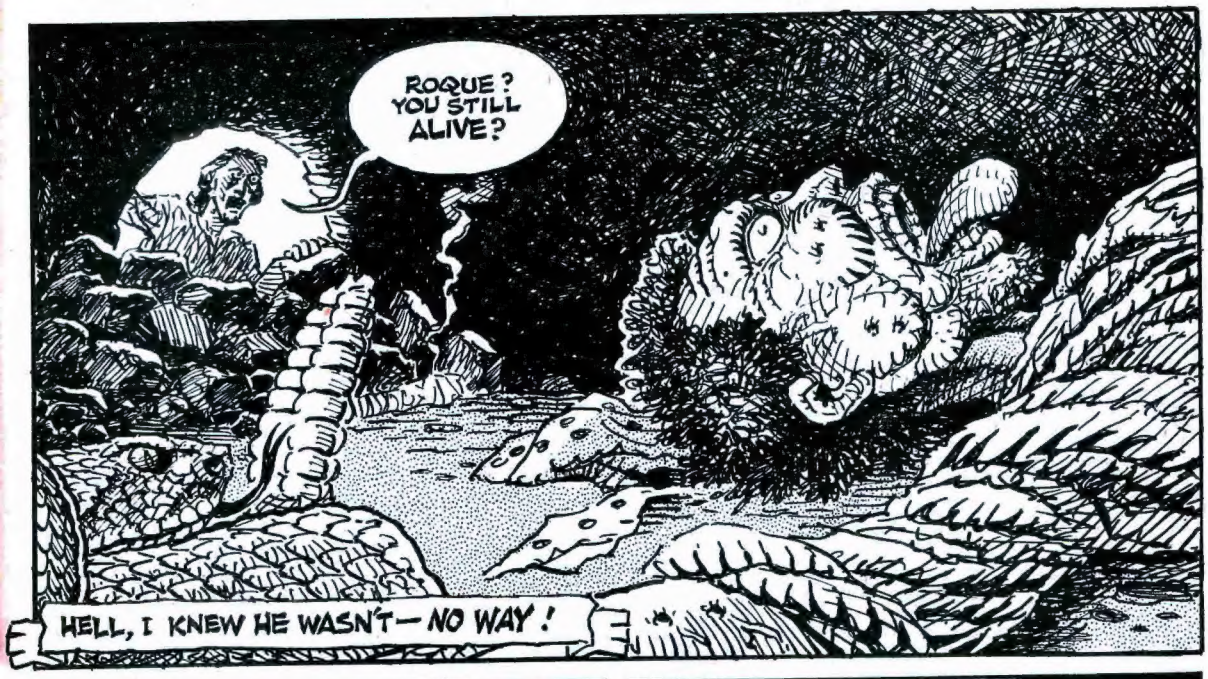
SURE ENOUGH, THERE WAS AN OPENING TO A CAVE, SHUT UP BY ROCKS AND BRUSH.
I'LL CRAWL INSIDE AND TAKE A PEEK..

I HEARD THE BUZZ, LIKE A CALABASH RATTLE, AND ROQUE'S SCREAM.

GOOD THING I STEPPED BACK; IT WAS THE STENCH THAT TIPPED ME OFF...

OLD RATTLERS ALWAYS SMELL LIKE THAT WHEN THEY'RE MOLESTED OR TROMPED ON BY COWS.

I GAVE THIS VIEJO PLENTY OF ROOM. WHEN I RETURNED, "LITTLE" ONES WERE STILL COMING OUT.



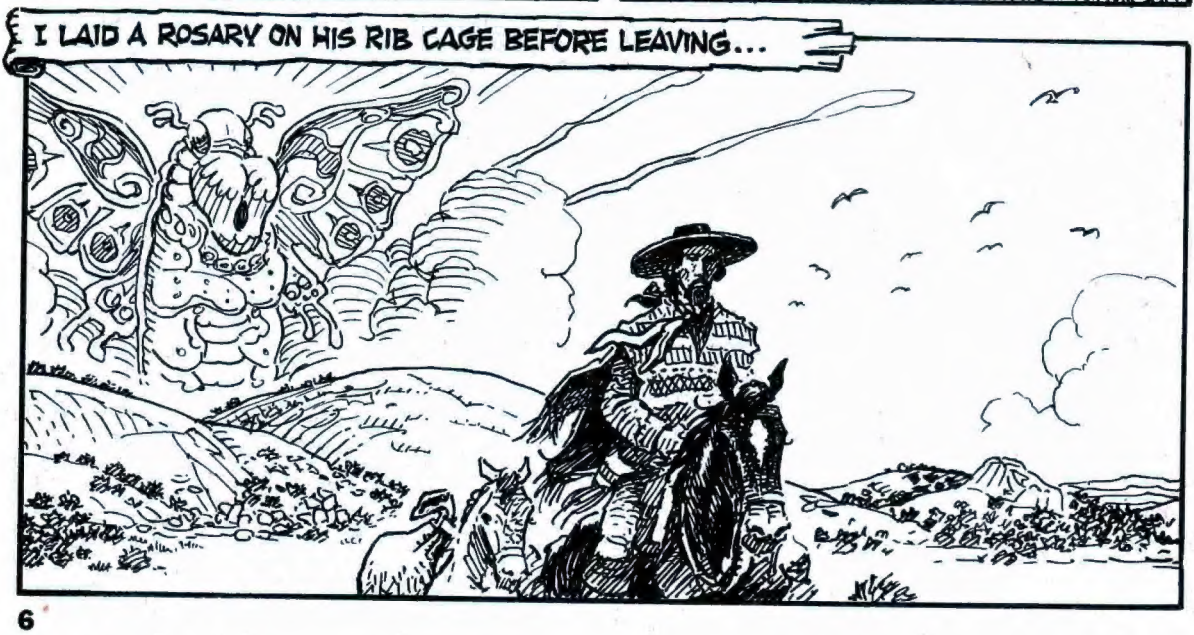
THE MEN RELAXED. THAT SILVER WAS STILL UP THERE... IF YOU HAD THE HUEVOS TO GO GET IT!

WELL I CAME BACK WITH MORE THAN OL' ROQUE DID — THAT'S FOR DAMNED SURE.

TRUTH IS, I STOPPED BY THE CERRO DEL ALMAGRES TO PRY LOOSE A FEW CHUNKS.

A MAN'S GOT TO LIVE, YOU KNOW, AND I WAS OUT OF WORK.

OLD COCHATA SEEMED TO UNDERSTAND. HIS BULTO WAS *BLANCO*, NOT *NEGRO*... AT LEAST FOR ME.


I LAID A ROSARY ON HIS RIB CAGE BEFORE LEAVING...

EPILOGUE ~ FURTHER EXPLOITATION OF THE TREASURE TROVE AT SAN SABÁ IN THE 18th CENTURY WAS MADE IMPOSSIBLE BY THE WILD COMANCHES, WHO DOMINATED THE REGION AND USED THE PRESIDIO AS A BASE OF OPERATIONS. ONLY BY WORD OF MOUTH WAS MEMORY OF THE MINES' WEALTH KEPT ALIVE.

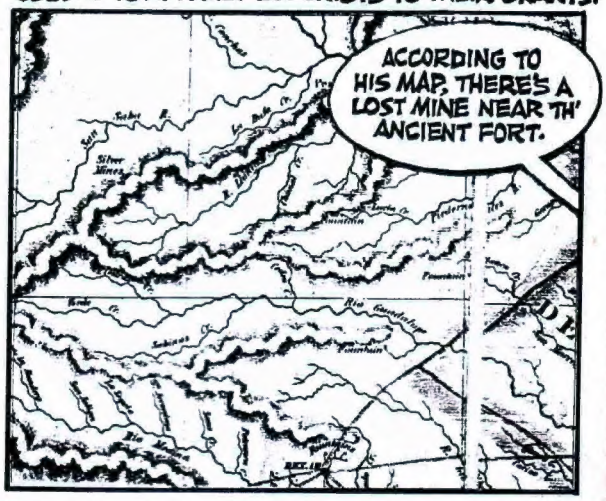
THESE TALES CIRCULATED WIDELY AND LURED VARIOUS ANGLO ADVENTURERS TO SPANISH TEXAS.

ONE WAS PHILIP NOLAN, WHO MET HIS DEATH ON THE PLAINS IN 1801.

OTHERS FOLLOWED IN NOLAN'S FOOTSTEPS, LIKE THE PARTY THAT LUGGED A METEORITE BACK TO NEW ORLEANS IN 1809, THINKING IT WAS PRECIOUS METAL.

WHEN MEXICO GAINED ITS INDEPENDENCE FROM SPAIN, SEVERAL EXPEDITIONS WERE SENT TO INVESTIGATE THE "OLD TALES" OF RICH SILVER DEPOSITS IN THE HILL COUNTRY.

EMPRESARIOS IN MEXICAN TEXAS LIKE STEPHEN F. AUSTIN HEARD OF THE LEGEND AND SHREWDLY USED IT TO ATTRACT COLONISTS TO THEIR GRANTS.



JIM BOWIE WAS A BELIEVER. HE MADE SEVERAL EXPLORATORY TRIPS TO THE OLD PRESIDIO.

ONE OF BOWIE'S INFORMANTS WAS A LIPAN APACHE CHIEF NAMED XOLIC, WHO — LIKE HIS ANCESTORS' KINSMEN — BROUGHT SMALL QUANTITIES OF SILVER TO TRADE AT FIESTAS IN SAN ANTONIO DE BEXAR.

BOWIE PRESENTED XOLIC WITH A SILVER-PLATED RIFLE, GAINED HIS CONFIDENCE, AND WAS ADOPTED INTO THE LIPAN TRIBE.

THE APACHES SHOWED BOWIE WHAT NO WHITEMAN HAD SEEN SINCE DIEGO GORTARI'S TIME.

GOOD GOD ALMIGHTY..

DAZZLED BY THE STACK OF INGOTS, BOWIE DESERTED HIS NEW-FOUND FRIENDS, RIDING HARD TO BEXAR..

WITH A FEW GOOD MEN, MY FORTUNE IS MADE!

BUT GREED BEING WHAT IT IS, HE TOOK TOO FEW MEN.

WAIT TILL YOU SEE WHAT'S IN THAT CAVE!!

OUTRAGED AT HIS TREACHERY, A LARGE PARTY OF XOLIC'S WARRIORS ATTACKED BOWIE'S EXPEDITION AND KEPT IT FROM REACHING THE CAVE.

KEEP FIRING AND DON'T WASTE YOUR SHOT!

IF WE BE LUCKY, WE MAY GET OUT OF THIS ALIVE.

THE OUTBREAK OF THE TEXAS REVOLUTION PREVENTED BOWIE FROM RETURNING TO SAN SABA', AND HIS KNOWLEDGE PERISHED WITH HIM AT THE ALAMO.

NONETHELESS, IN AN INDEPENDENT TEXAS THE QUEST FOR THE RICHES OF ALMAGRES BECAME THE SEARCH FOR "BOWIE'S LOST MINE."

CAN YOU FIND IT A'GIN ZEB?

YEP, BUT I'D RATHER KEEP MY HAIR!!

IN THE 1840s A GROUP OF GERMAN NOBLEMEN BOUGHT THE LAND FOR COLONIZATION, SIGHT-UNSEEN.

THE COUNTRY ABOUNDS IN MINERAL WEALTH AND HE CLAIMS TO KNOW WHERE.

WHEN THE TRUTH BECAME KNOWN, THE GERMANS WERE OBLIGED TO MAKE PEACE WITH THE COMANCHES BEFORE THEY COULD SETTLE THE HILL COUNTRY.

ALSO, WE ASK TO SURVEY THE SAN SABA' VALLEY AND SEARCH FOR METALS OF NO VALUE TO THE RED MAN..

MOST OF THE EMIGRANTS WERE FARMERS, NOT PROSPECTORS, BUT TANTALIZING RELICS WOULD OCCASIONALLY TURN UP AS THE LAND WAS PLOWED ...LIKE ONE OF FELIPE RABAGO'S CANNONBALLS.

BEFORE LONG, A BRISK MARKET DEVELOPED FOR WORM-EATEN MAPS AND CHARTS TO HIDDEN SPANISH RICHES, ONE OF THEM SUPPOSEDLY TAKEN FROM BOWIE'S BODY BY A MEXICAN SOLDIER...

EVEN NOTED HISTORIANS, WORKING FROM DOCUMENTS FOUND IN THE MEXICAN ARCHIVES, JOINED THE SEARCH.

OVER THE YEARS, FORTUNES WERE SUNK INTO THE LIMESTONE AND GRANITE HILLS BUT THEY ALL PROVED TO BE "DRY HOLES."

STILL, THE LEGEND PERSISTS, AND WHO'S TO SAY THAT REPEATED FAILURES MAY NOT LEAD TO EVENTUAL SUCCESS?

Jaxon·88

END

At last, the *truth* about childhood!

Doug Potter's *Chips & Vanilla* tears away the myths of childhood and lays bare the tawdry reality of what children *really* are like...

Well, OK, maybe *Chips and Vanilla* isn't the latest Jackie Collins novel, but it's still pretty good. *Darn* good, we mean. Potter looks at some of the somber terrors facing kids—bullies, school, relations with the opposite sex, parents—through the eyes of a pre-adolescent just nudging into puberty. The kid teams up with an otherworldly dog, and then...

But see for yourself. *Chips & Vanilla* is an all ages book and it's on sale now at your favorite shop. From Kitchen Sink Press.

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It's big!

It's bold!

It's bizarre!

Best of all,

It's back!

It's BLAB! 3

Buy it!

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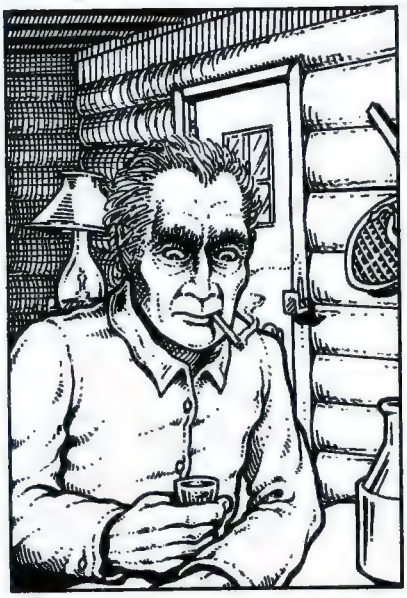
Yes, it's coming in September: Monte Beauchamp's BLAB! 3, a wild and woolly giant 112-page squarebound digest that serves up the absolute best in comics and culture. In BLAB! 3, you'll find Drew Friedman examining "Comic Shop Clerks of America"; Joe Coleman, Dan Clowes, Kim Deitch XNO and Spain Rodgriguez drawing stories; the saga of Bazooka Joe; and a forum on Robert Crumb, featuring essays written by the likes of Alan Moore, Harvey Pekar, Charles Burns, Justin Green, and a swarm of others!

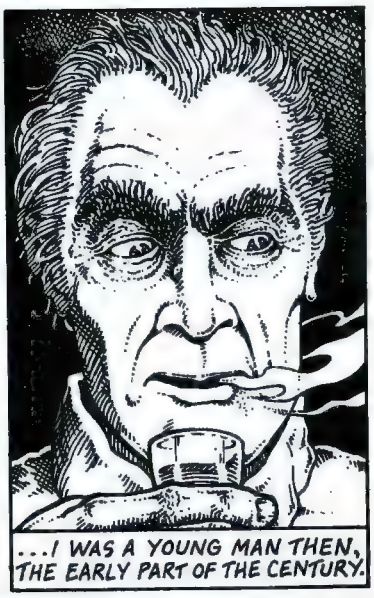
BLAB! 3 is jammed to capacity with art, stories and articles about the things YOU want to read about! Watch for BLAB! 3 this September!

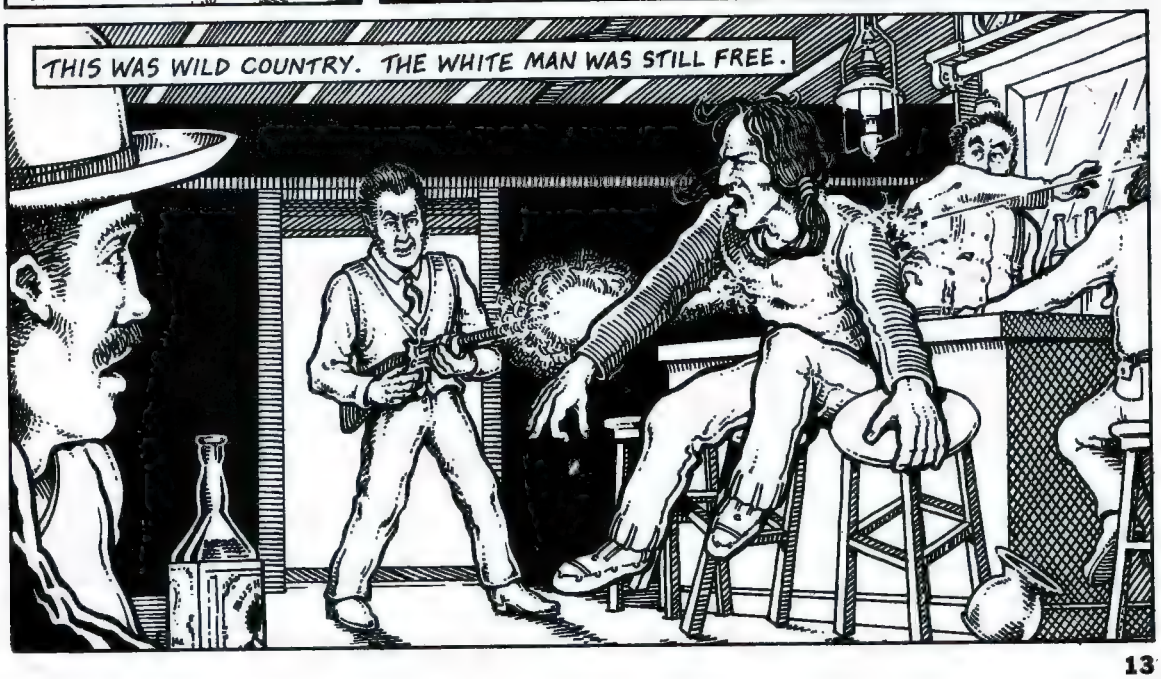
From Kitchen Sink Press.

THE OLD WISCONSIN THAT I KNEW

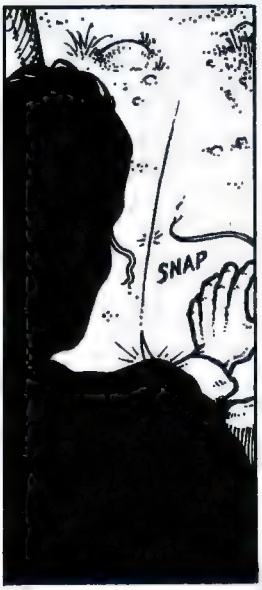
STORY: P.S. MUELLER ART: BILL HARTWIG







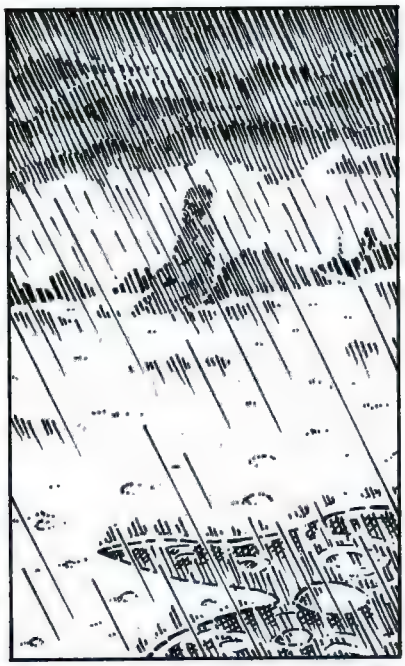
THE LAWS WERE THERE...
..BUT THEY DIDN'T APPLY.
THOSE SONS OF BITCHES CAN GET AWAY WITH ANYTHING NOW. SPEAR-FISHING, GAMBLING, ANYTHING...
...AT LEAST I STILL HAVE MY MEMORIES.
...I STILL HAVE MY LAND.


SNAP

I'LL BE DAMNED...

ROWRR

GULLK



THE TRUE STORY OF A NUDE DANCER

by Sylvie Rancourt with Jacques Boivin

Melody from Kitchen Sink Press

ADULTS ONLY

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Full Color Art!
Rock & Roll!

Featuring Reed & Kate and the Shakers.

The 33⅓ RPM album contains 12 original songs, four written by Reed Waller and three by Kate Worley.

At your favorite comic shop in November from Ordinary Records of course.

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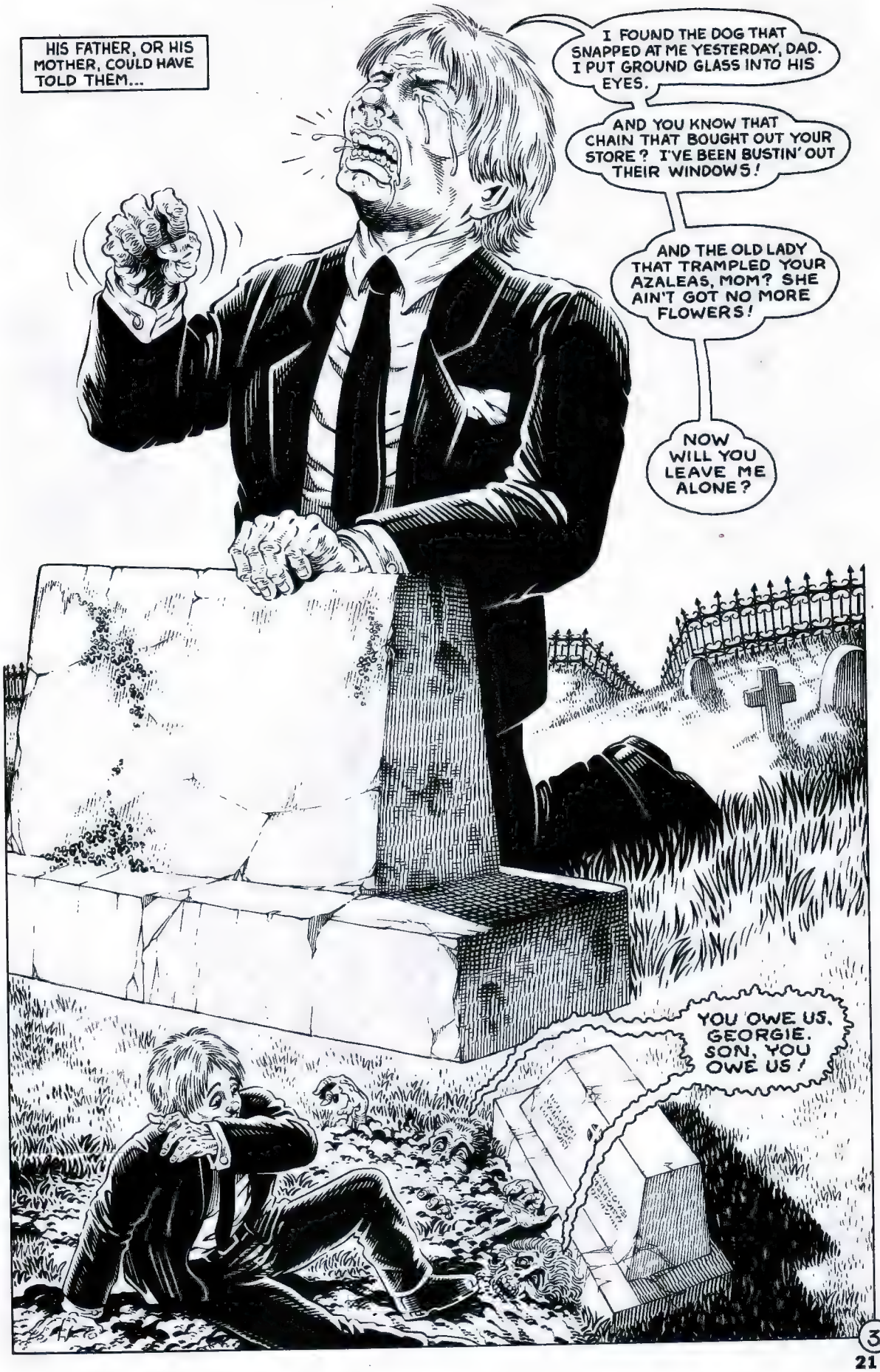
Reed Waller & Kate Worley

small acts of revenge
© STEVE RASNIC TEM • STORY AND RON WILBER • ART • 88
TALES FROM THE CRYPT
THAT'S PRETTY WEIRD STUFF, GEORGE!
WHY'D YOU WANT TO COLLECT THIS TRASH, ANYWAY?
BOYS! GIRLS! LADIES! MEN!
TALES FROM THE CRYPT

THEY KNEW ABOUT RETRIBUTION IN THE 50'S, YOU KNOW. THEY UNDERSTOOD WHAT JUSTICE REALLY MEANS.
WHATEVER YOU SAY, GEORGE.
WE'LL HAVE PIZZA, IF YOU WANT TO DROP BY LATER...
GAG!
GERTIE'S PIZZA
CHOK!
WE DON'T WANT HIM, I'M TELLIN' YOU! HE'S AN OK GUY, BUT HE'S TOO WEIRD, MAN.
THE GUY READS COMIC BOOKS, FOR CHRISSAKE!
FRATERNITY DANCE
EVERYONE KNEW GEORGE WAS UNPOPULAR, WEIRD, THAT HE STILL READ COMIC BOOKS...
BUT THEY DID NOT KNOW GEORGE WAS HEAVILY INTO REVENGE...
2.


HIS FATHER, OR HIS MOTHER, COULD HAVE TOLD THEM...
I FOUND THE DOG THAT SNAPPED AT ME YESTERDAY, DAD. I PUT GROUND GLASS INTO HIS EYES.
AND YOU KNOW THAT CHAIN THAT BOUGHT OUT YOUR STORE? I'VE BEEN BUSTIN' OUT THEIR WINDOWS!
AND THE OLD LADY THAT TRAMPLED YOUR AZALEAS, MOM? SHE AIN'T GOT NO MORE FLOWERS!
NOW WILL YOU LEAVE ME ALONE?
YOU OWE US, GEORGIE. SON, YOU OWE US!
3.

GEORGE? IS ANYTHING WRONG?
I... I WAS JUST PRACTICING...
SOMETHING...
I'M FINE, MARCIE.
I'M JUST FINE.
THE HEADSTONE, GEORGE.
YOU WERE TALKING...
YOU'RE JUST WHO I NEED RIGHT NOW.
IT'S MY CAR...
SURE.
I GUESS I OWE YOU.
YOU DON'T OWE ANYBODY, GEORGE.
ESPECIALLY NOT ME.
BUT GEORGE DID OWE. HE'D BEEN REMINDED OF THAT EVERY DAY OF HIS CHILDHOOD.
YOU WON'T BE OUT OF THIS ROOM UNTIL YOU'VE READ THAT ENTIRE BOOK, GEORGE. YOU OWE US THAT. YOU'RE GOING TO BE A LAWYER AND MAKE US PROUD!
4.

YOU HAVE NO TIME TO DATE, YOUNG MAN. YOU CAN CALL THAT GIRL BACK RIGHT NOW.
NO DISTRACTIONS.
AFTER ALL, YOU OWE US, GEORGIE!
NATIONAL PERSPIRER
PROOF: ELVIS LIVING ON #2 SWAMP ROAD
D. KITCHEN SEES UFO
YOU OWE US, GEORGIE!
YOU WILL NOT ACCEPT THIS SCHOLARSHIP! IT'S TOO FAR AWAY! YOU'RE GOING TO STATE WHERE WE CAN KEEP AN EYE ON YOU.
GEORGE OWED THEM. WHEN HIS PARENTS DIED, GEORGE AT FIRST WAS RELIEVED. HE HAD CONTROL OVER HIS LIFE FOR THE FIRST TIME. ALL DEBTS WERE CANCELLED...
WEREN'T THEY?
NOW THERE'S A STRANGE ONE. FIRST, HE SAYS HE OWED THEM. NO TEARS; HE DON'T SEEM TO CARE THEY'RE DEAD. THEN HE ASKS ME WHO SOLD THEM THE CAR?
POLICE
STOP
STOP
ICE
5.

OLD HABITS DIE HARD. THE ONLY PASSION GEORGE HAD KNOWN WHILE HIS PARENTS LIVED HAD BEEN WRUNG OUT OF HIM IN HIS ATTEMPTS TO PAY BACK HIS "DEBT." AFTER THEY DIED, HE DISCOVERED THAT ACTS OF REVENGE, LARGE AND SMALL, COULD FILL HIM WITH A SIMILAR PASSION, AND THESE ACTS TOO COULD BECOME HABIT...
BORKOWSKI
USED CARS
BEST DEALS EVER!
GASOLINE
VENGEANCE WAS MAGIC; IT UNDID ALL WRONG! THE VERY ACTS ELEVATED HIM TO A KIND OF GODHOOD, AND IN THIS, HIS FINEST HOUR, HE COULD EXACT A RARE AND BEAUTIFUL JUSTICE.
6.

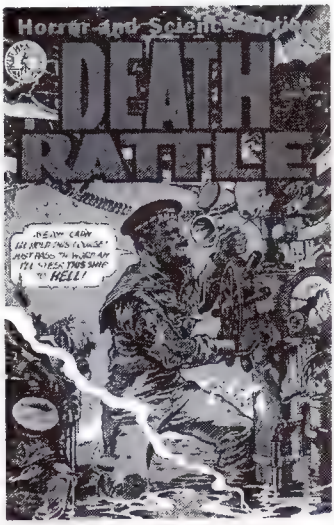
THAT SHOULD DO IT.
COULDN'T DO WITHOUT YOU, GEORGE.
UH... MARCIE. THERE'S A DANCE THIS WEEKEND, AN' I THINK YOU KNOW HOW MUCH I...
MARCIE!
YOU READY YET?
PAUL!
GEORGE, THIS IS PAUL. HE'S MY... FIANCE.
I'VE HEARD A LOT ABOUT YOU, GEORGE.
BLAM!
HE DIDN'T THINK ABOUT MARCIE THAT NIGHT. HE DIDN'T THINK ABOUT LOVE...
FOR HE WAS TOO SWEPT-UP IN ANOTHER KIND OF PASSION.

HE DIDN'T NEED MARCIE. HE HAD OTHER THINGS...
AFTER ALL, HE STILL HAD HIS FRIENDS...
HE WAS FINALLY IN CONTROL; IT WAS A GOD-LIKE FEELING. HE WAS FILLED WITH AN OVERWHELMING PASSION...
TALES FROM THE CRYPT
AND VENGEANCE HAD BROUGHT HIM FRIENDS.
end

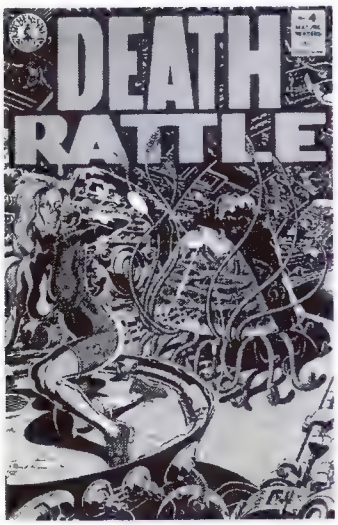
Death Rattle Back Issues!

***Death Rattle* 1: Color. Charles Burns, Corben, Holmes, Dallas.**

***Death Rattle* 2: Color. Jaxon's "God's Bosom," Will Eisner, Holmes.**



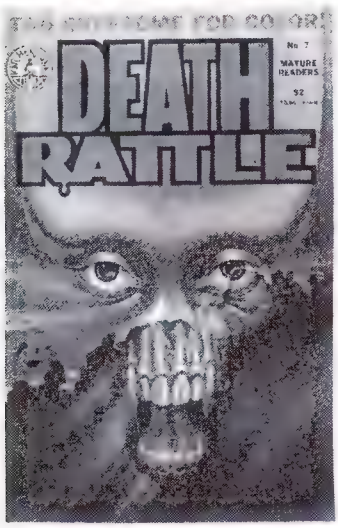
***Death Rattle* 3: Color. Doug Hansen. Jaxon's "Bulto" saga begins.**



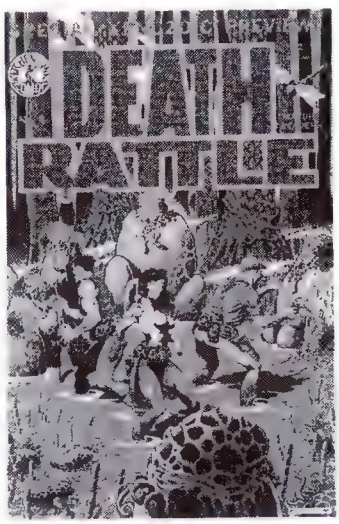
***Death Rattle* 4: Color. Baron, Holmes, Jaxon in more madness.**

***Death Rattle* 5: Color. Baron, Holmes, Wolverton, Jaxon.**

***Death Rattle* 6: b&w. Holmes, Strnad, Bissette, Veitch, Jaxon.**



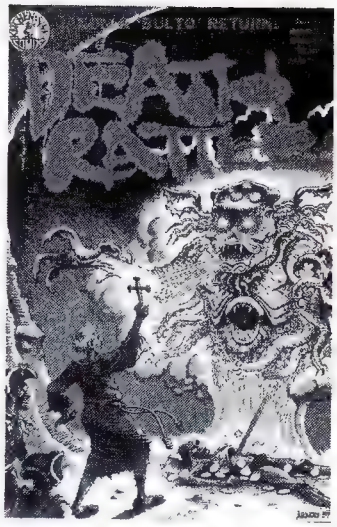
***Death Rattle* 7: b&w. Spain, Stiles, Stout and Ed Gein!**



***Death Rattle* 8: Schultz's "Xenozoic;" Burr, Stiles. Great stuff!**

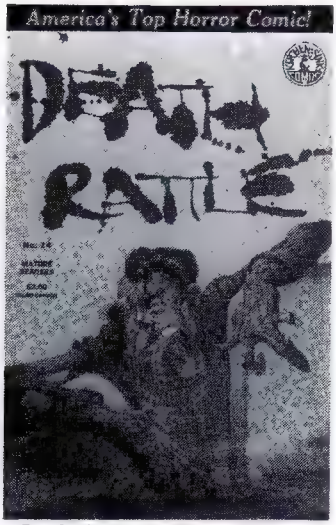
***Death Rattle* 9: Holmes' & Ingersoll's "Child of the Media," Wolverton.**

Death Rattle 11: Holmes, Ingersoll, Vincent, Mueller, Hartwig.

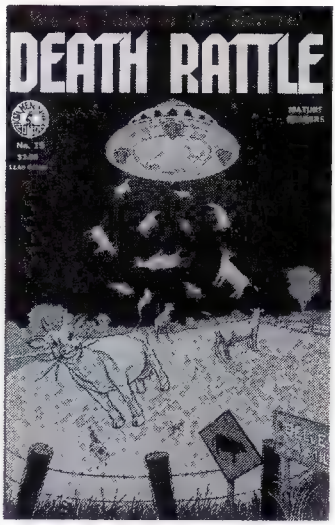


Death Rattle 12: Jaxon and Bulto return! Stiles too!

Death Rattle 13: Burger, Jaxon, Mueller, Hartwig, Poe.

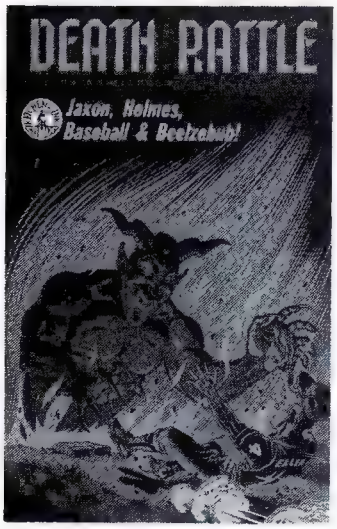


Death Rattle 14: Baron, Holmes, Armstrong, Jaxon, Wolverton.



Death Rattle 15: Jaxon, Wooley, Simpson, Mueller & Hartwig.

Death Rattle 16: Burger, Jaxon, Wolverton, Holland and Wilber.



Death Rattle 17: Holmes' & Wooley's "Slide, Sinner, Slide;" Jaxon.

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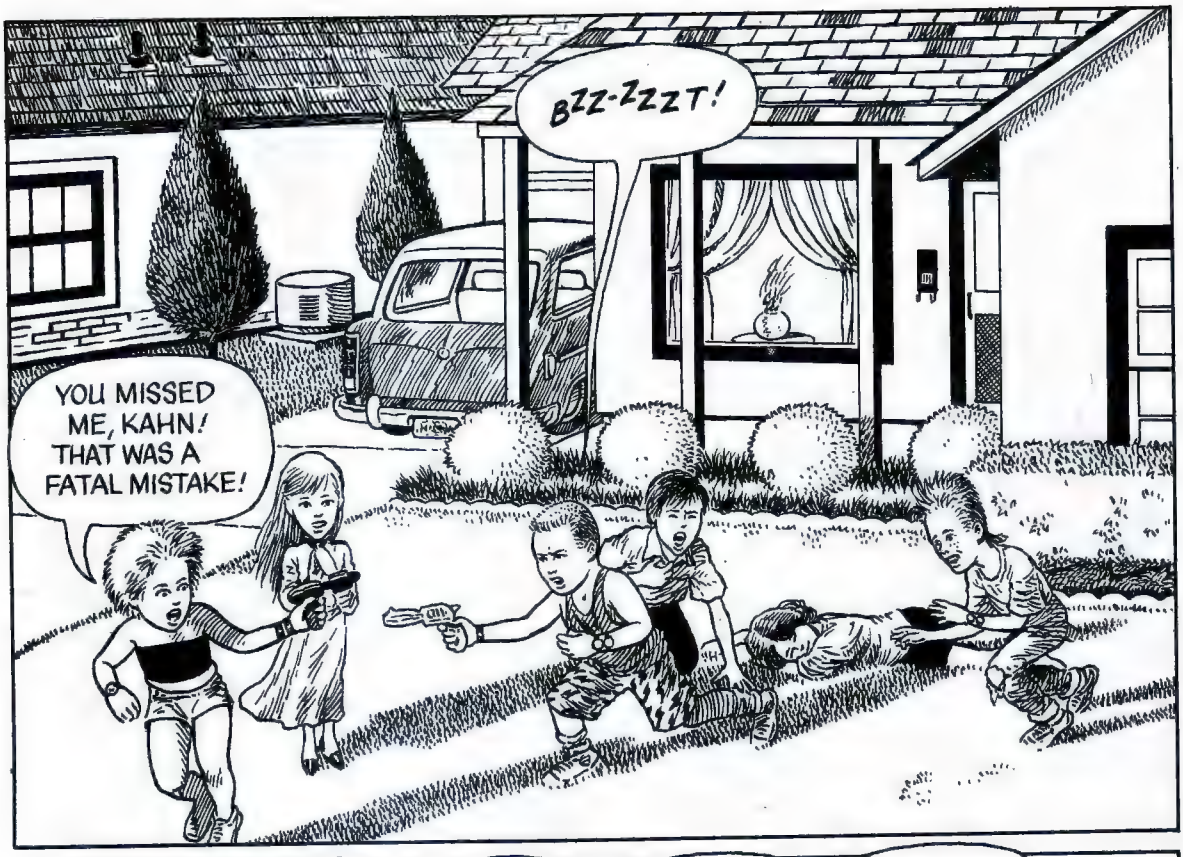
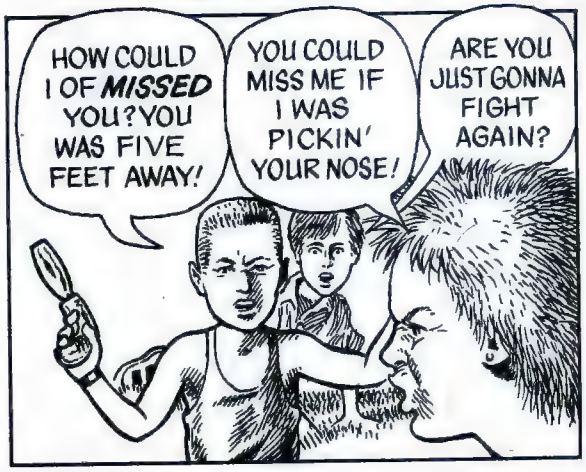
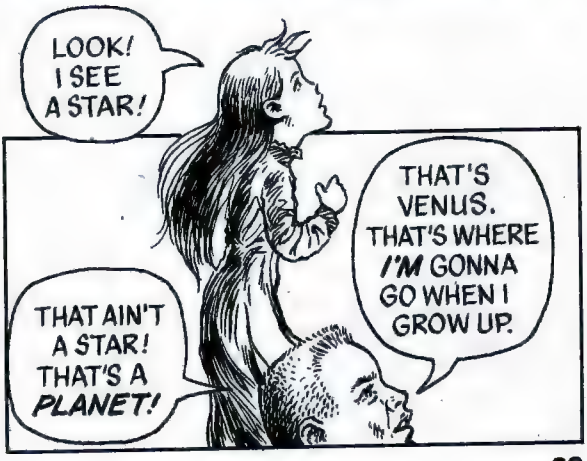
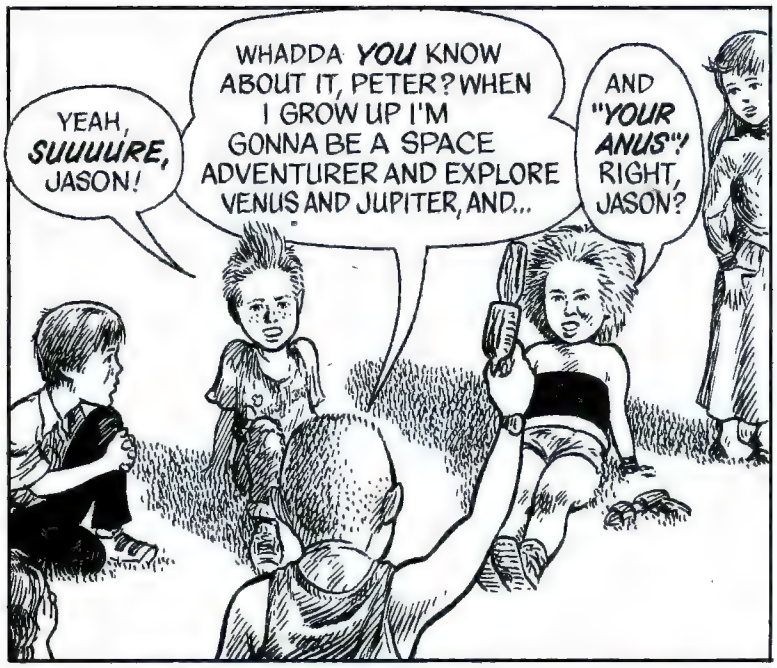

BZZ-ZZZT!
YOU MISSED ME, KAHN! THAT WAS A FATAL MISTAKE!

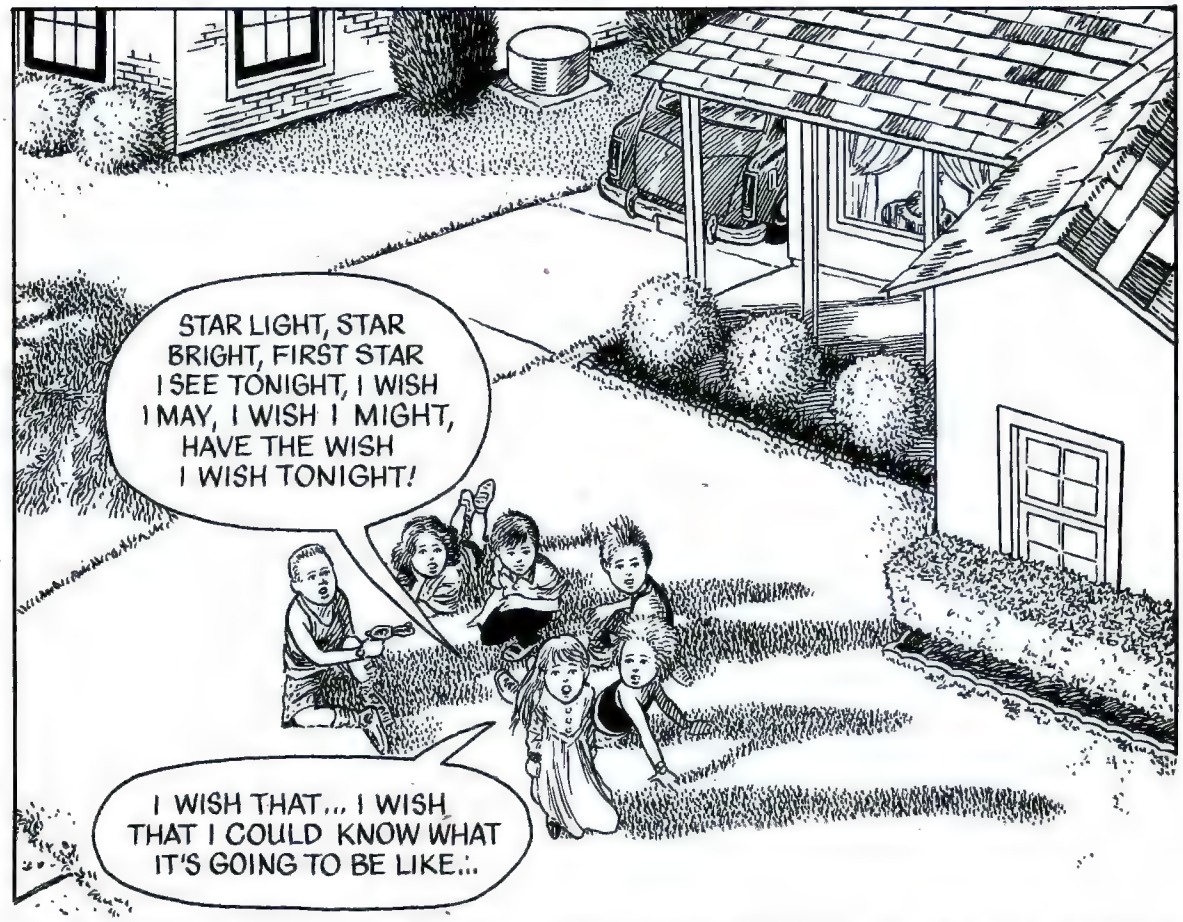

HOW COULD I OF MISSED YOU? YOU WAS FIVE FEET AWAY!
YOU COULD MISS ME IF I WAS PICKIN' YOUR NOSE!
ARE YOU JUST GONNA FIGHT AGAIN?

I WISH YOU WOULDN'T FIGHT EVERY TIME, JENNIFER!
AAA! I'M TIRED OF THIS GAME, ANYWAY. WE ONLY PLAY IT 'CAUSE JASON MAKES US!
I DO NOT!
CAN I BE NOT DEAD NOW?

YES, ASHLEY, YOU CAN BE NOT DEAD, NOW!
SO WHADDYA WANNA PLAY NOW?
I GOTTA GO IN PRETTY SOON!


LOOK! I SEE A STAR!
THAT'S VENUS. THAT'S WHERE I'M GONNA GO WHEN I GROW UP.
THAT AIN'T A STAR! THAT'S A PLANET!





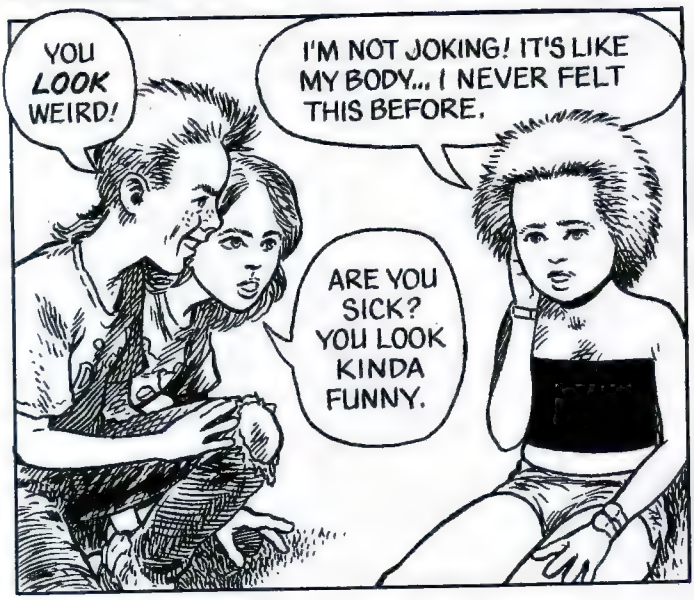
WHEN I GROW UP

SCRIPT: GERARD JONES *ART:* DOUGLAS POTTER

GAWD, MELANIE! WHAT A STUPID WISH!
YEAH, WHY DON'T YOU WISH FOR MONEY OR SOMETHING?

I THINK THERE ARE SOME THINGS MORE IMPORTANT THAN MONEY. LIKE,.. LIKE FRIENDS. AND LIFE.
BUT WHY WOULD YOU WANT TO KNOW HOW IT COMES OUT? THAT WOULD TAKE ALL THE FUN OUT OF IT.

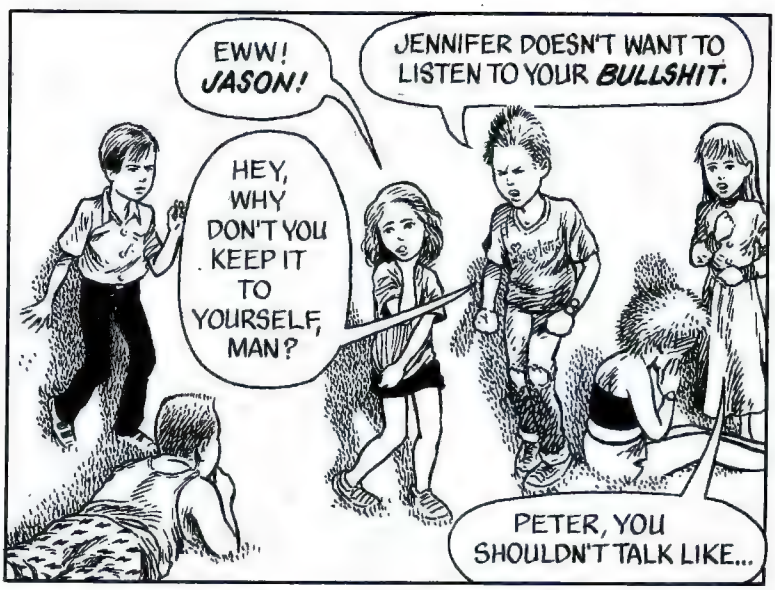
IT'S NOT A GAME, DAMON.
I FEEL WEIRD.


YOU LOOK WEIRD!
I'M NOT JOKING! IT'S LIKE MY BODY... I NEVER FELT THIS BEFORE.
ARE YOU SICK? YOU LOOK KINDA FUNNY.

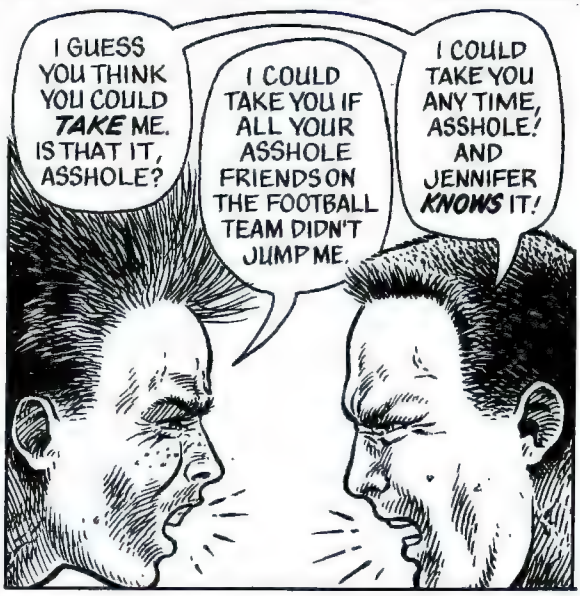
ASHLEY'S RIGHT. YOUR FACE LOOKS DIFFERENT.

LOOKS PRETTY GOOD TO ME.

I DON'T THINK I EVER NOTICED HOW *CUTE* YOU ARE.


EWW! *JASON!*
JENNIFER DOESN'T WANT TO LISTEN TO YOUR *BULLSHIT.*
HEY, WHY DON'T YOU KEEP IT TO YOURSELF, MAN?
PETER, YOU SHOULDN'T TALK LIKE...

YEAH? I KNOW A FEW CHICKS WHO *LOVE* LISTENING TO MY "BULLSHIT."
YOU THINK YOU'RE HOT SHIT JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE A BIG *JOCK.*
WHAT'S A JOCK?

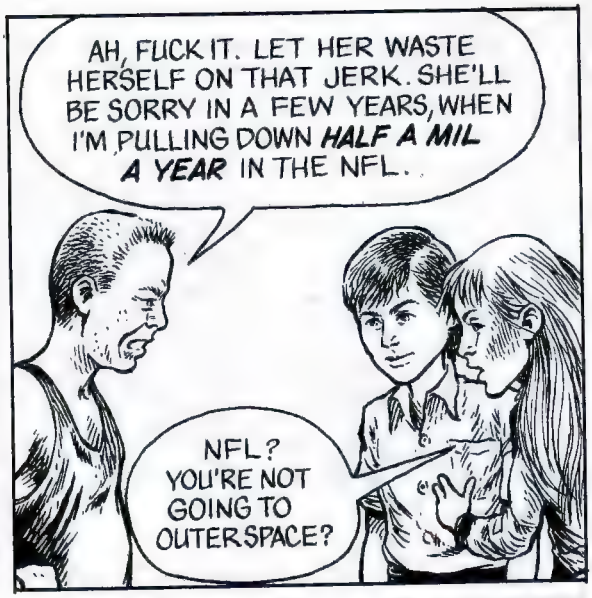

I GUESS YOU THINK YOU COULD *TAKE* ME. IS THAT IT, ASSHOLE?
I COULD TAKE YOU IF ALL YOUR ASSHOLE FRIENDS ON THE FOOTBALL TEAM DIDN'T JUMP ME.
I COULD TAKE YOU ANY TIME, ASSHOLE! AND JENNIFER *KNOWS* IT!

COME ON, JENNIFER. THIS GUY'S AN ASSHOLE.
OH... I DON'T THINK HE'S ALL *THAT* BAD.

I'M GLAD YOU'RE NOT AS DUMB AS YOUR *BOYFRIEND.*

I'LL SEE YOU *AROUND,* JASON!

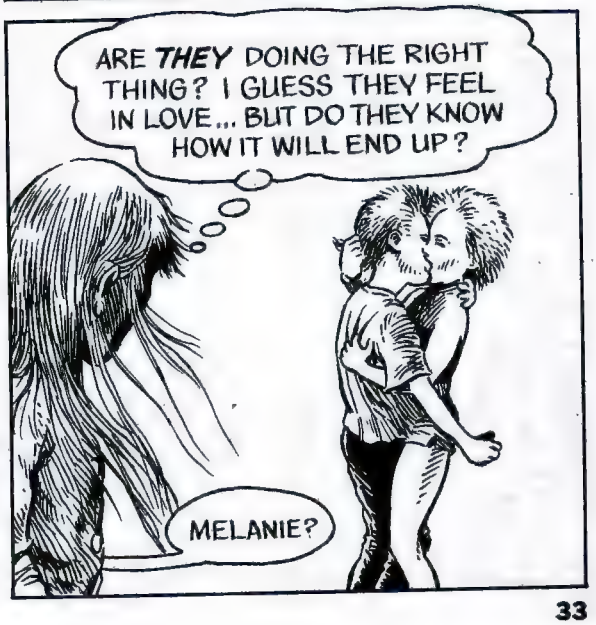
DAMON? WHAT'S HAPPENING?
JUST SOME MACHO GAMES. DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT. THEY'LL GROW UP.


AH, FUCK IT. LET HER WASTE HERSELF ON THAT JERK. SHE'LL BE SORRY IN A FEW YEARS, WHEN I'M PULLING DOWN HALF A MIL A YEAR IN THE NFL.
NFL? YOU'RE NOT GOING TO OUTER SPACE?

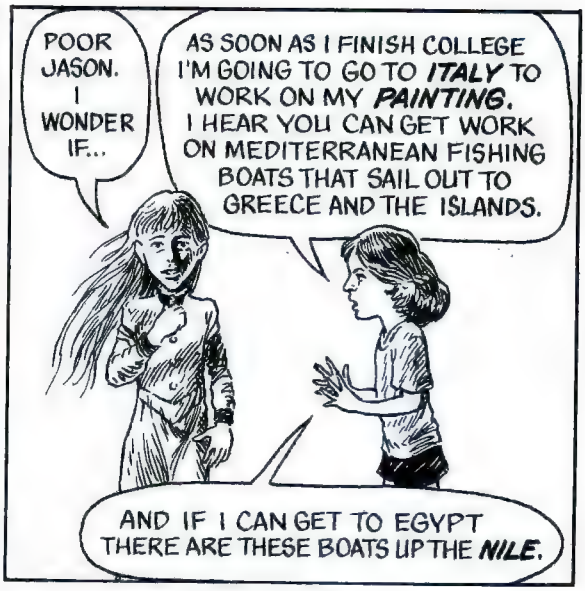
HOLY SHIT! ARE YOU FOR REAL? JESUS!
BUT JASON...
HEY, MAN. EASE UP ON MELANIE, OKAY?

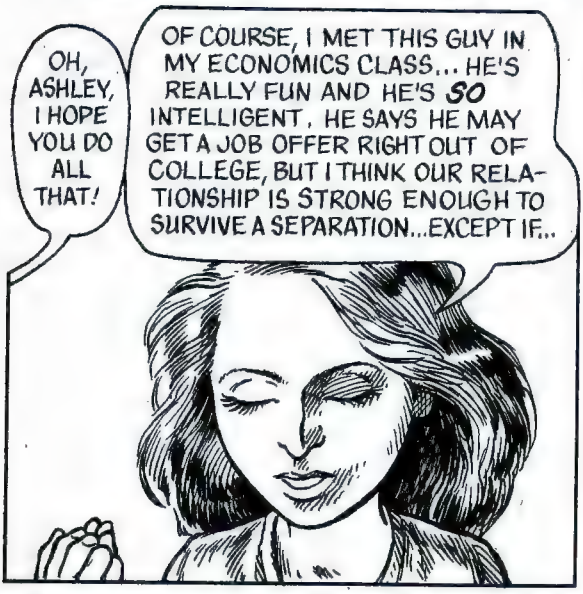
LISTEN, I GOT SOME OF MY DAD'S GIN.
HEY, I DIDN'T KNOW YOU PARTIED, MAN.
WHAT ELSE IS THERE IN LIFE?

I HOPE THEY KNOW WHAT THEY'RE DOING.

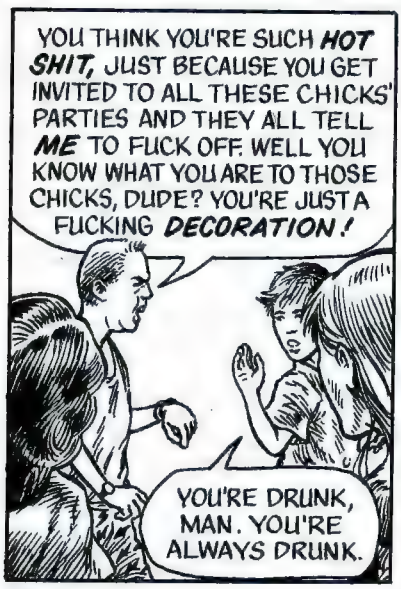

ARE THEY DOING THE RIGHT THING? I GUESS THEY FEEL IN LOVE... BUT DO THEY KNOW HOW IT WILL END UP?
MELANIE?

IT'S FUNNY HOW EVERYTHING'S TURNING OUT, ISN'T IT? I MEAN, PETER AND JENNIFER... AND JASON NOT GETTING HIS FOOTBALL SCHOLARSHIP AND EVERYTHING.
JASON DIDN'T...?
WELL, I'M NOT GOING TO LET ANYTHING LIKE THAT STOP ME. I'M GOING TO LIVE LIFE TO THE FULLEST!

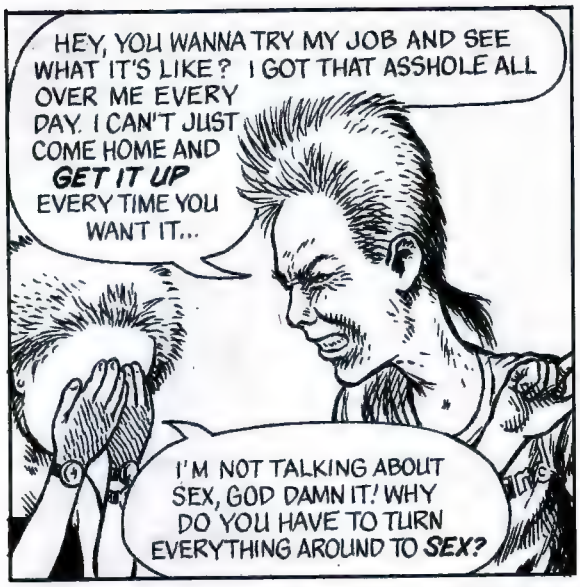

POOR JASON. I WONDER IF...
AS SOON AS I FINISH COLLEGE I'M GOING TO GO TO ITALY TO WORK ON MY PAINTING. I HEAR YOU CAN GET WORK ON MEDITERRANEAN FISHING BOATS THAT SAIL OUT TO GREECE AND THE ISLANDS.
AND IF I CAN GET TO EGYPT THERE ARE THESE BOATS UP THE NILE.

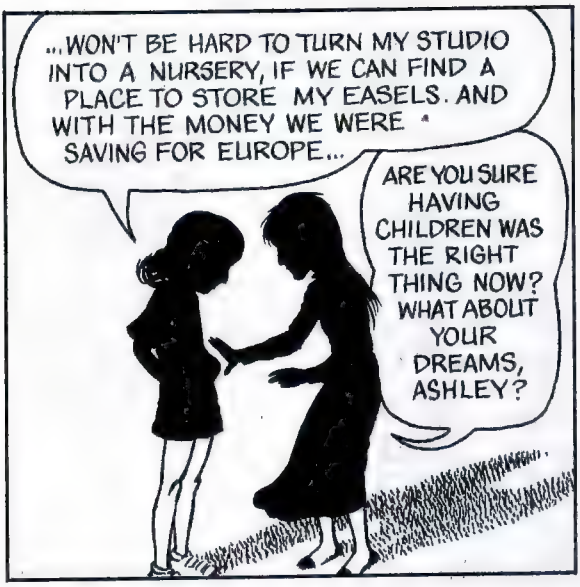

OH, ASHLEY, I HOPE YOU DO ALL THAT!
OF COURSE, I MET THIS GUY IN MY ECONOMICS CLASS... HE'S REALLY FUN AND HE'S SO INTELLIGENT. HE SAYS HE MAY GET A JOB OFFER RIGHT OUT OF COLLEGE, BUT I THINK OUR RELATIONSHIP IS STRONG ENOUGH TO SURVIVE A SEPARATION...EXCEPT IF...

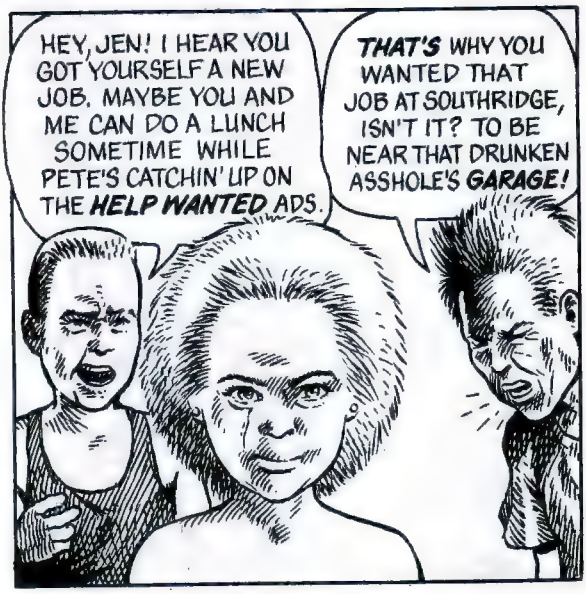
WHAT DO YOU THINK, MELANIE? WHAT SHOULD I DO?
I... DON'T KNOW. I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO!

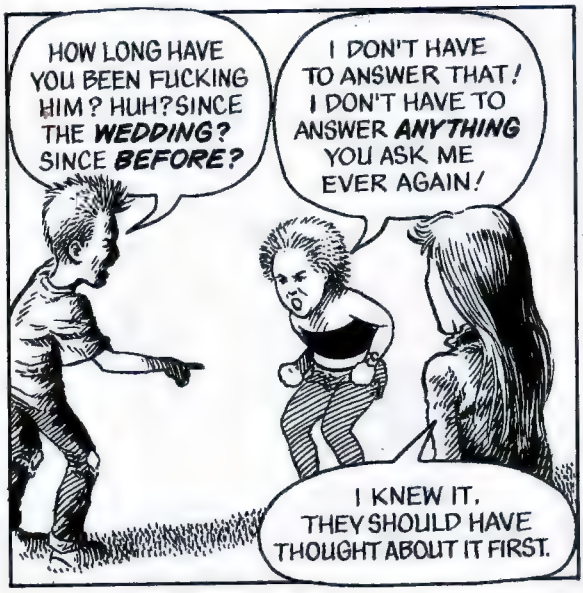

YOU THINK YOU'RE SUCH HOT SHIT, JUST BECAUSE YOU GET INVITED TO ALL THESE CHICKS' PARTIES AND THEY ALL TELL ME TO FUCK OFF. WELL YOU KNOW WHAT YOU ARE TO THOSE CHICKS, DUDE? YOU'RE JUST A FUCKING DECORATION!
YOU'RE DRUNK, MAN. YOU'RE ALWAYS DRUNK.

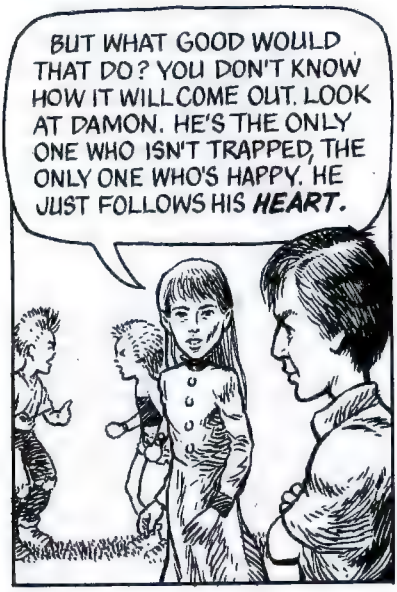
AND I GUESS YOU NEVER GET DRUNK. I GUESS YOU'RE TOO PRETTY TO GET DRUNK, HUH?
I'M SORRY, MAN. I LIKE YOU, BUT I GOT A LIFE TO LIVE.
...ONLY MARRIED YOU BECAUSE I THOUGHT YOU WERE GONNA LOVE ME, GONNA MAKE ME FEEL LIKE I WAS WORTH SOMETHING.

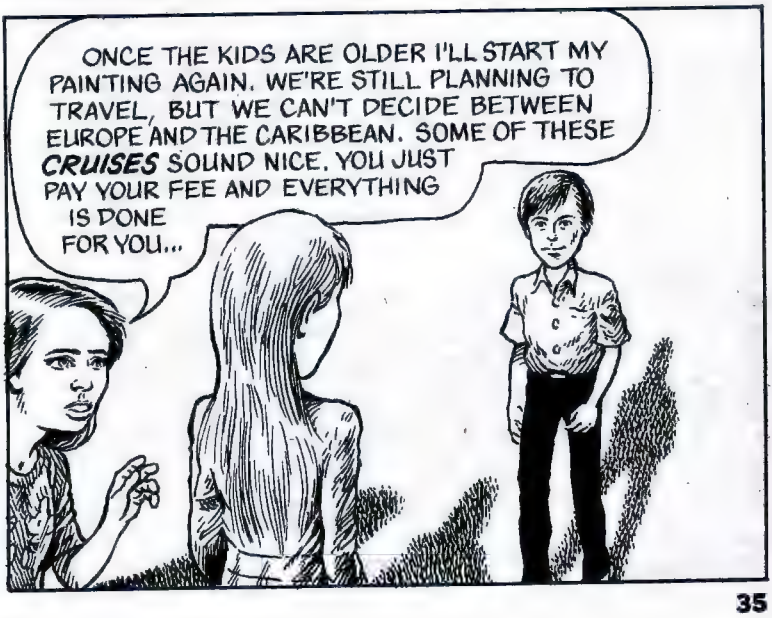

HEY, YOU WANNA TRY MY JOB AND SEE WHAT IT'S LIKE? I GOT THAT ASSHOLE ALL OVER ME EVERY DAY. I CAN'T JUST COME HOME AND GET IT UP EVERY TIME YOU WANT IT...
I'M NOT TALKING ABOUT SEX, GOD DAMN IT! WHY DO YOU HAVE TO TURN EVERYTHING AROUND TO SEX?

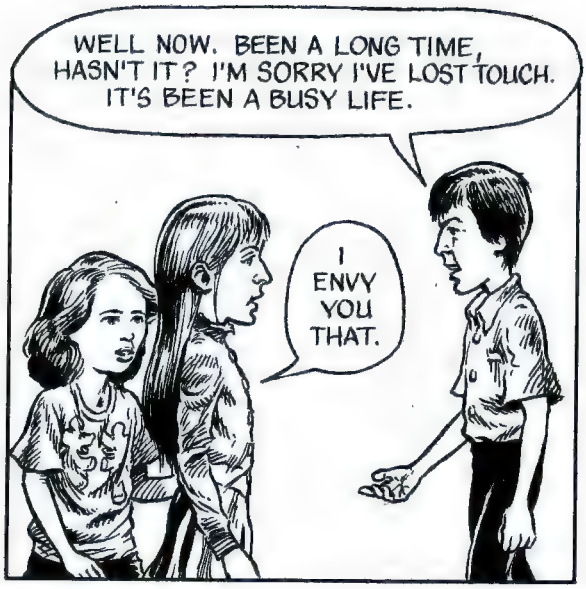

...WON'T BE HARD TO TURN MY STUDIO INTO A NURSERY, IF WE CAN FIND A PLACE TO STORE MY EASELS. AND WITH THE MONEY WE WERE SAVING FOR EUROPE...
ARE YOU SURE HAVING CHILDREN WAS THE RIGHT THING NOW? WHAT ABOUT YOUR DREAMS, ASHLEY?


HEY, JEN! I HEAR YOU GOT YOURSELF A NEW JOB. MAYBE YOU AND ME CAN DO A LUNCH SOMETIME WHILE PETE'S CATCHIN' UP ON THE HELP WANTED ADS.
THAT'S WHY YOU WANTED THAT JOB AT SOUTHRIDGE, ISN'T IT? TO BE NEAR THAT DRUNKEN ASSHOLE'S GARAGE!


HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN FUCKING HIM? HUH? SINCE THE WEDDING? SINCE BEFORE?
I DON'T HAVE TO ANSWER THAT! I DON'T HAVE TO ANSWER ANYTHING YOU ASK ME EVER AGAIN!
I KNEW IT. THEY SHOULD HAVE THOUGHT ABOUT IT FIRST.


BUT WHAT GOOD WOULD THAT DO? YOU DON'T KNOW HOW IT WILL COME OUT. LOOK AT DAMON. HE'S THE ONLY ONE WHO ISN'T TRAPPED, THE ONLY ONE WHO'S HAPPY. HE JUST FOLLOWS HIS HEART.


ONCE THE KIDS ARE OLDER I'LL START MY PAINTING AGAIN. WE'RE STILL PLANNING TO TRAVEL, BUT WE CAN'T DECIDE BETWEEN EUROPE AND THE CARIBBEAN. SOME OF THESE CRUISES SOUND NICE. YOU JUST PAY YOUR FEE AND EVERYTHING IS DONE FOR YOU...


WELL NOW. BEEN A LONG TIME, HASN'T IT? I'M SORRY I'VE LOST TOUCH. IT'S BEEN A BUSY LIFE.
I ENVY YOU THAT.

MELANCHOLY MELANIE. ALWAYS WORRYING ABOUT SOMETHING, AREN'T YOU? IT WON'T HELP, YOU KNOW. LET THESE PEOPLE TAKE CARE OF THEMSELVES. OR RUIN THEMSELVES. YOU CAN'T STOP IT.
I KNOW. BUT I KEEP THINKING...

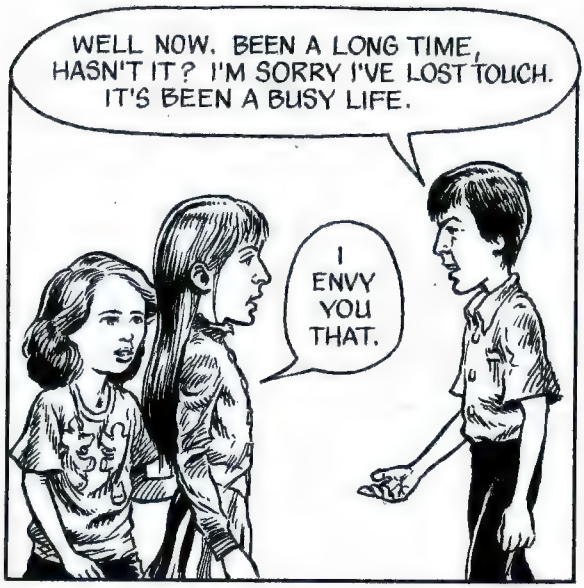
THAT'S THE PROBLEM. YOU KEEP THINKING.
DAMON...?

I WONDER WHERE HE'S GOING. ALWAYS OFF TO SOMETHING NEW.
ITALY, MAYBE. GREECE. EGYPT. I SHOULD GO, MELANIE. I SHOULD JUST GO, LIKE DAMON.

IT'S NOT TOO LATE. YOU CAN STILL RUN AFTER HIM, CATCH HIM, GO WITH HIM.
IT'S NOT THAT EASY. TEN YEARS AGO I COULD HAVE...

THEN I'LL DO IT! I CAN STILL FOLLOW HIM, WHEREVER HE'S GOING! DAMON!

DAMON?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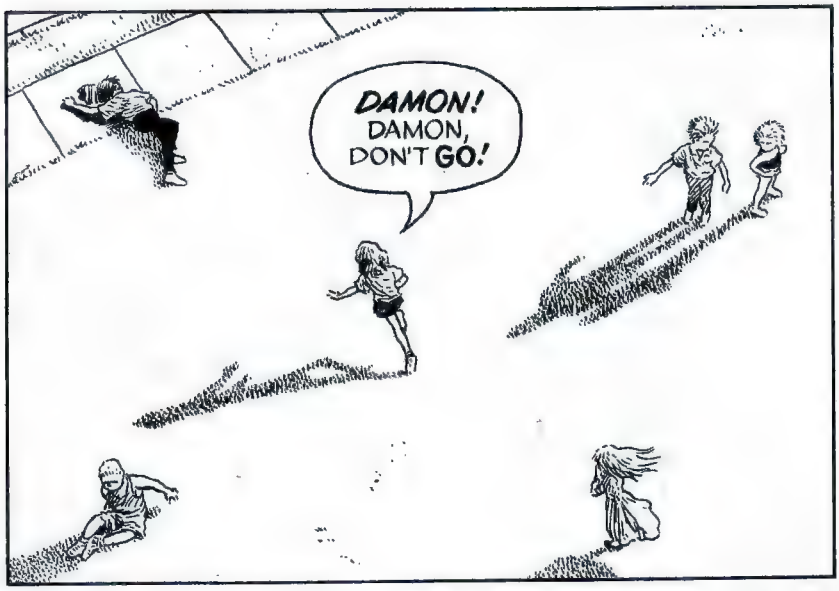
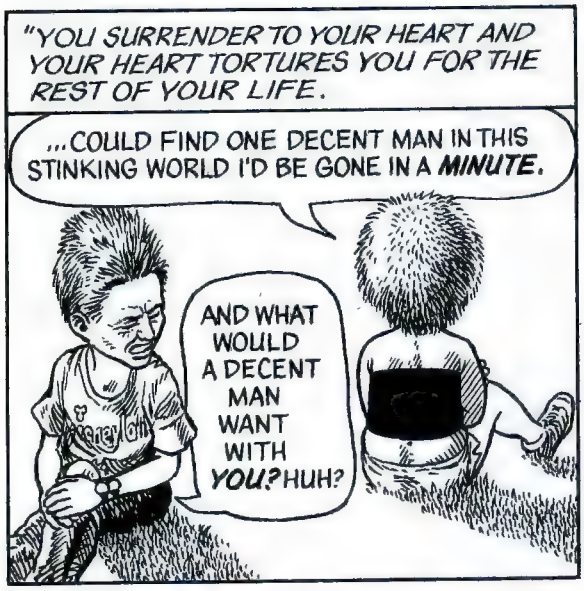
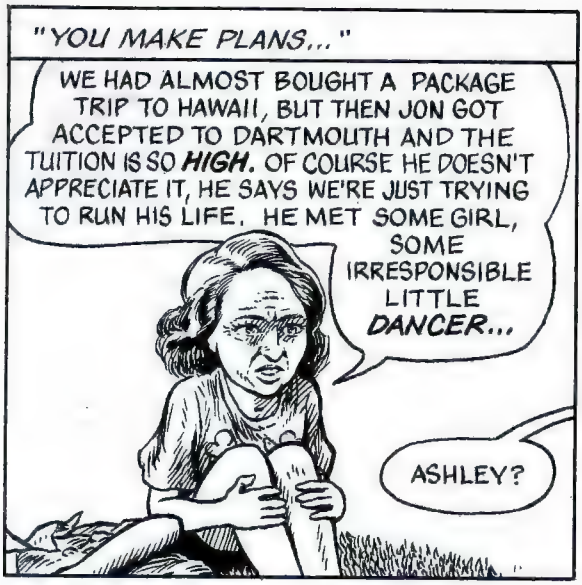




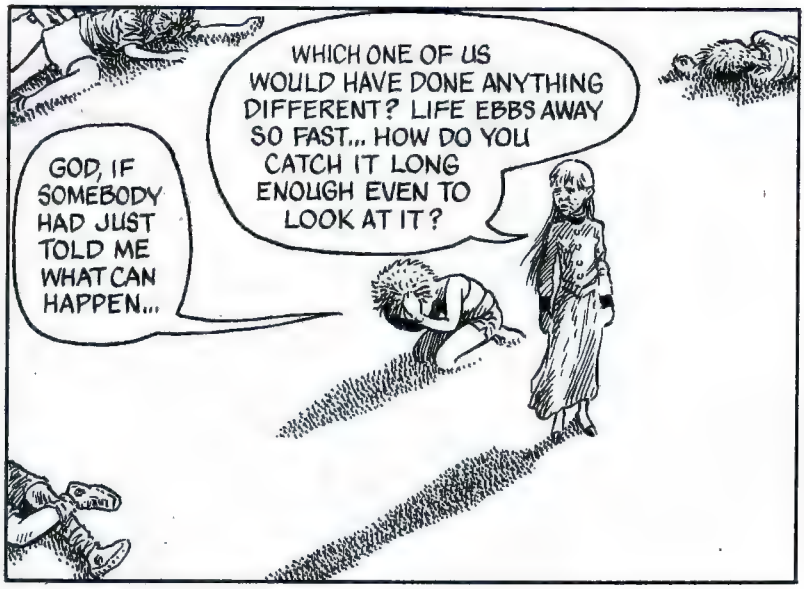
"YOU TRY TO SOFTEN THE PAIN AND THE SOFTENING KILLS YOU."


"YOU MAKE PLANS..."
WE HAD ALMOST BOUGHT A PACKAGE TRIP TO HAWAII, BUT THEN JON GOT ACCEPTED TO DARTMOUTH AND THE TUITION IS SO HIGH. OF COURSE HE DOESN'T APPRECIATE IT, HE SAYS WE'RE JUST TRYING TO RUN HIS LIFE. HE MET SOME GIRL, SOME IRRESPONSIBLE LITTLE DANCER...
ASHLEY?

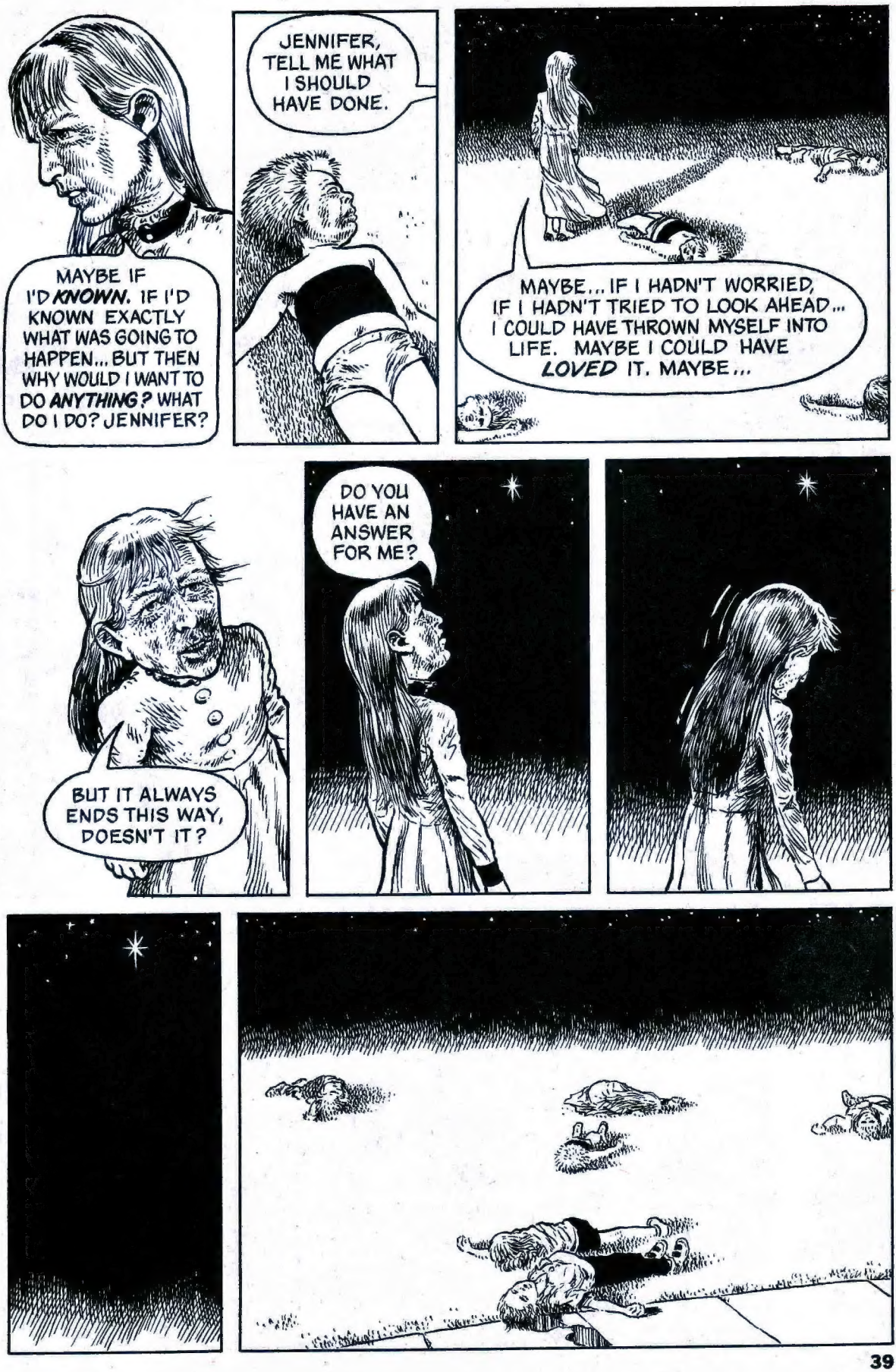
ASHLEY, WHAT SHOULD WE DO?
THE FRA ANGELICO FRESCOES IN FLORENCE ARE AS VIVID TODAY AS WHEN HE PAINTED THEM. THERE'S A BLUE THERE, LIKE THE SKY, LIKE THE SKY IN SUMMER WHEN YOU WERE A LITTLE GIRL.

DID I GO TO ITALY? I DON'T REMEMBER.
I DIDN'T. I DIDN'T GO ANYWHERE. I STAYED WITH PEOPLE. I TRIED TO HELP.

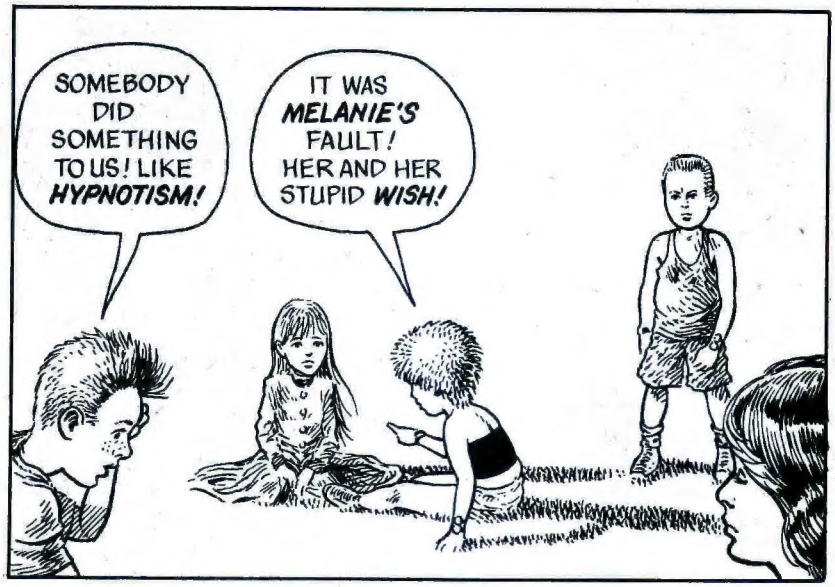
TRIED TO HELP? WHAT DID YOU EVER DO? YOU WATCHED. WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME IT MIGHT END UP LIKE THIS?
WOULD YOU HAVE LISTENED TO ME?

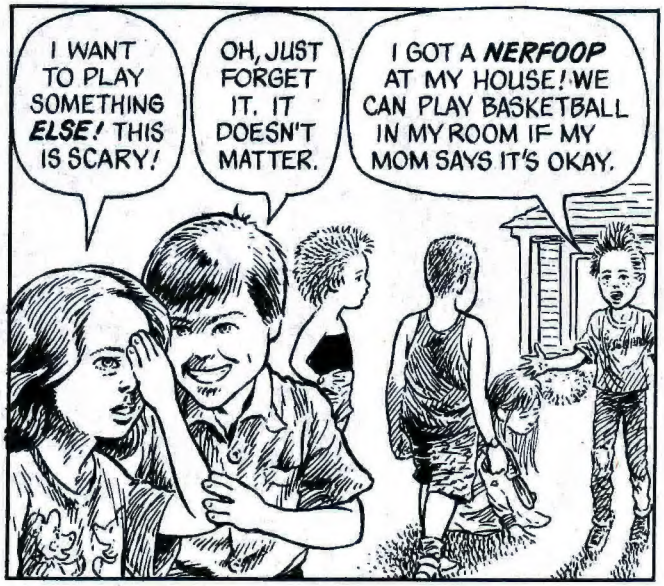

GOD, IF SOMEBODY HAD JUST TOLD ME WHAT CAN HAPPEN...
WHICH ONE OF US WOULD HAVE DONE ANYTHING DIFFERENT? LIFE EBBS AWAY SO FAST... HOW DO YOU CATCH IT LONG ENOUGH EVEN TO LOOK AT IT?

EVERYTHING I WAS AFRAID OF HAPPENED. AND BECAUSE I WAS AFRAID OF IT...I COULDN'T DO ANYTHING TO STOP IT.

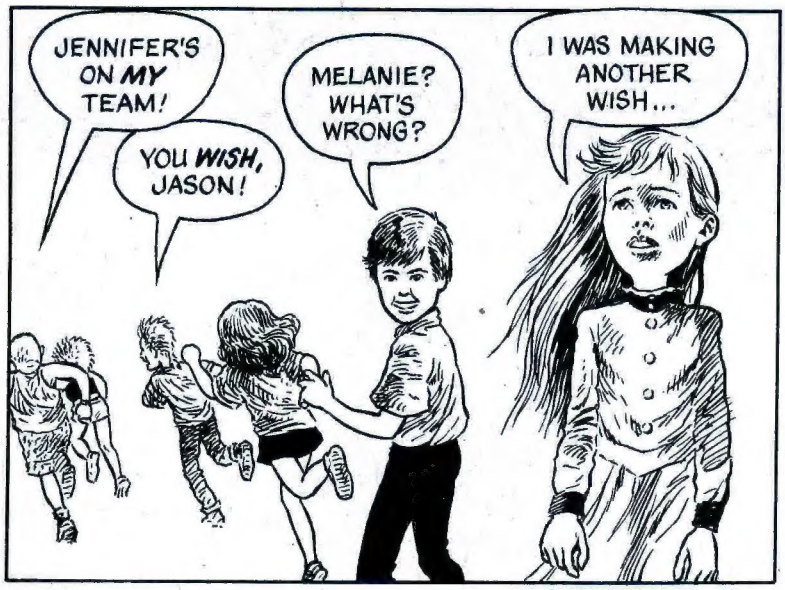

MAYBE IF I'D *KNOWN.* IF I'D KNOWN EXACTLY WHAT WAS GOING TO HAPPEN... BUT THEN WHY WOULD I WANT TO DO *ANYTHING?* WHAT DO I DO? JENNIFER?
JENNIFER, TELL ME WHAT I SHOULD HAVE DONE.
MAYBE... IF I HADN'T WORRIED, IF I HADN'T TRIED TO LOOK AHEAD... I COULD HAVE THROWN MYSELF INTO LIFE. MAYBE I COULD HAVE *LOVED* IT. MAYBE...
BUT IT ALWAYS ENDS THIS WAY, DOESN'T IT?
DO YOU HAVE AN ANSWER FOR ME?

WHAT HAPPENED?


SOMEBODY DID SOMETHING TO US! LIKE HYPNOTISM!
IT WAS MELANIE'S FAULT! HER AND HER STUPID WISH!

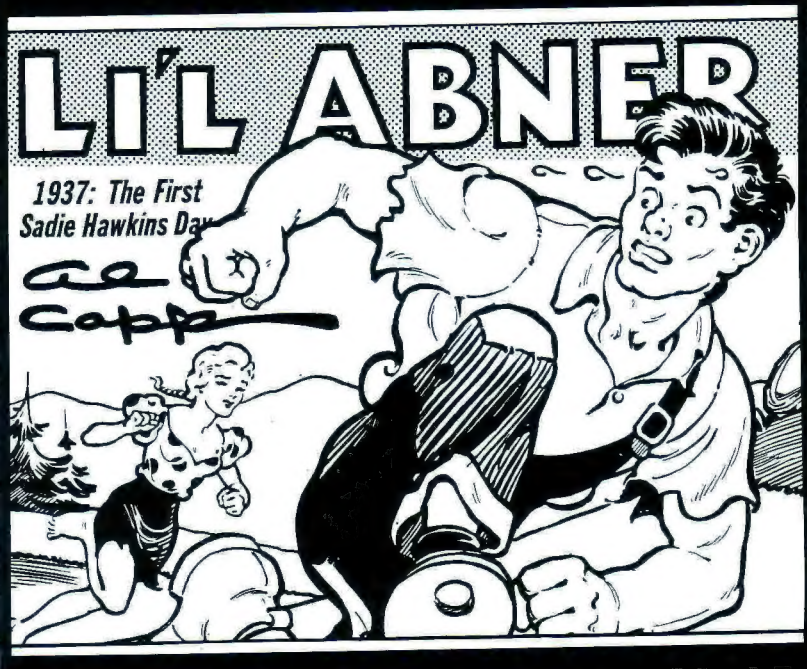

I WANT TO PLAY SOMETHING ELSE! THIS IS SCARY!
OH, JUST FORGET IT. IT DOESN'T MATTER.
I GOT A NERFOOP AT MY HOUSE! WE CAN PLAY BASKETBALL IN MY ROOM IF MY MOM SAYS IT'S OKAY.

JUST FORGET IT...
LET'S RACE!


JENNIFER'S ON MY TEAM!
YOU WISH, JASON!
MELANIE? WHAT'S WRONG?
I WAS MAKING ANOTHER WISH...

BUT I GUESS YOU ONLY GET ONE.

Get Ready For Volume 3 of the World's Greatest Comic Strip in October!



That's right! Volume 3 of Al Capp's *Li'l Abner* is on sale *now*. This book highlights the 1937 daily strips—when Capp introduced what was to become a virtual national holiday—Sadie Hawkins Day. Experience the very first one—where Abner is *caught*. In this wildly funny volume Abner becomes a bodyguard, a cultured gentleman-wrestler, rescues Dogpatch from a greedy speculator and wins a scholarship to a woman's college and must attend in drag. In this book meet Blugstone of Scotland Yard, Bet-a-Million Bashby, Leslie Love and Sadie Hawkins! Find out why *Li'l Abner* has been called the greatest comic strip ever produced! Retailers: it's available from every distributor! Readers: it's available from finer comics shops, and via subscription from us if unavailable elsewhere! Proudly published by:

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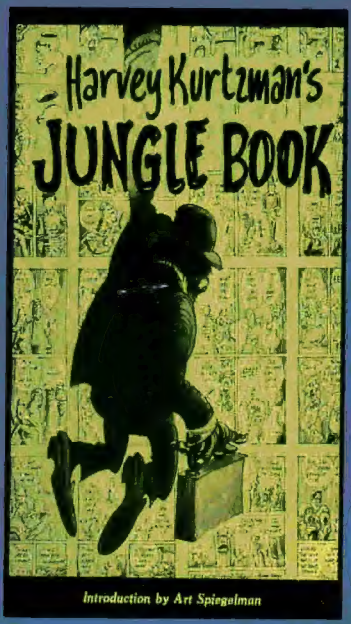
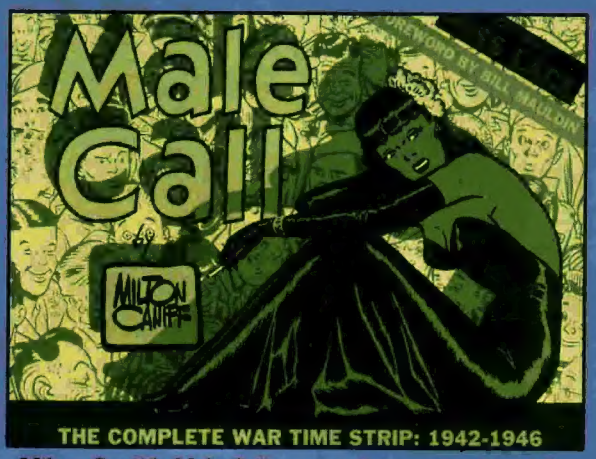
Great Books by Great Artists

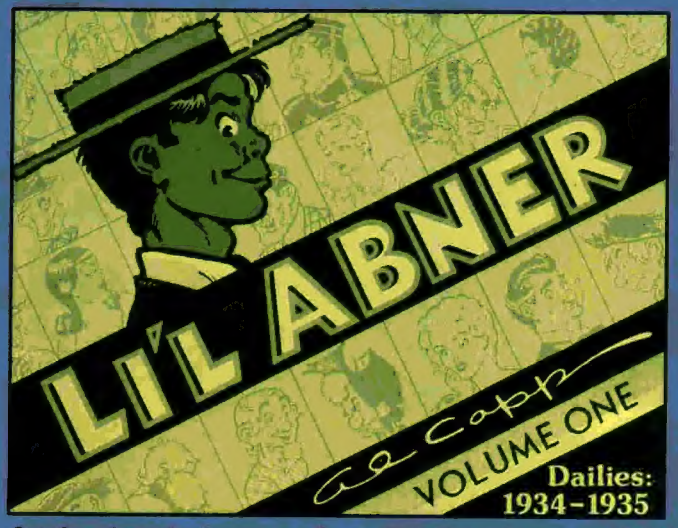


Harvey Kurtzman's *Jungle Book* collects four great stories from 1959, related as only the creator of *Mad* can tell them. With a foreword by Art Spiegelman, and Kurtzman's own comments on the stories inside. In both hardcover and new softcover!

KITCHEN SINK PRESS

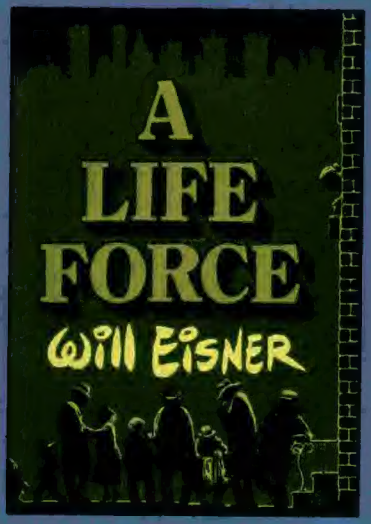


Milton Caniff's *Male Call* reprints the great cartoonist's *complete* World War II strip for servicemen. It features Miss Lace, a Foreword by Bill Mauldin, and a reminiscence by Caniff himself! In hard and softcover. A must!



Our three latest books are on sale now! The first volume of the *Complete Li'l Abner* by Al Capp is a 232-page beauty printing the daily strips from 1934 and 1935.

Will Eisner's *A Life Force* is the master artist's latest novel, set in the 1930s. *Flash Gordon* features the daily strip of 1951-52, by Dan Barry, Kurtzman & Frazetta!



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If you can't find these books at your shop, order from us! Hardcover *Life Force* signed by Eisner; hardcover *Flash Gordon* signed by Kurtzman. Add $2 per order for p&h. MC/Visa accepted—No_____Exp_____

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